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Drawn by T. Heuteraan

THOUGHTS OF HOME

CHRISTMAS EVE WITH THE FLEET IN MANILA BAY 1898



SIR BRUIN

An Adventure on the Border of Three Realms

By S. R. CROCKETT

PART I CUB AND CUB-LEADER



can get it. Though, alas! when I look at the hotels and boarding-houses which have sprung up there during the last twenty years at the other end of the valley, I fear my seclusion will often be invaded.

It makes me feel very old to remember that it is approaching twenty years since I did my little bit of plumbing the depths of the Cavalocecia lake and my scraplet of bear-hunting on the Anderberg debacle. I promised to tell the tale to certain youngsters who are always clamoring and pestering for a story, as if I had not enough to do to maintain myself beyond the jurisdiction of the Small Debt Court by telling tales for bread and butter, without having to do it for nothing every time I happen to be boarded and "held up" by a gang of cut-throats despoiled in pinholes and knicker-bockers—neither over clean.

There were no hotels in all Cavalocecia in my time. Thus there were with a bed or two, wine, black and brown bread, plenty of dried Graubunden flesh, which tastes so good when the teeth are young and stout and jaws perennially willing, but not a waiter, not a Kurhouse, not so much as the heading of a hotel bill to be found in the valley from one end of it to the other.

But there were other things. We stopped a while—that is, Archie Gordon and I—at the house of honest Johann Mals, in Old Shules. Johann had a son Kristen, who was as brisk and as good a hunter as was to be found in all the border lands.

I may as well tell how we came to be acquainted with Kristen. It is rather characteristic. Archie Gordon and I were learning the language. I was his tutor. Archie always remembered what "something to eat" was, and I never forgot the German or the Romanish for "something to drink." So we got on very well in the countries which we visited. But I must tell you more about Archie and myself soon. It is Kristen Mals and our first introduction to him that I have in hand just now.

Archie and I had been tramping from New Shules to Old Shules. It was raining and Archie was depressed. But the worse the weather the higher my spirits rise. In blue, unclouded weather I am often dull as ditch-water, but directly the rain descends and there is weather about, with the promise of more and worse in the offing, I grow happy and sing—or at least I make a loud noise. Now when I sing I have no friends,

For I put it to you if it is a friend's part to discourage a willing performer by saying, "I wish you would hush!" or "Oh, do shut up!" every time he opens his mouth.

Well, at any rate, it was raining, and I was in singularly good spirits. I sang. Archie had exhausted his vocabulary and was plunging suddenly along, wishing that instead of having been well brought up by Presbyterian parents in Cook County, Ill., he had been reared a brakeman on a cattle train, in order that he might have been able adequately to express his feelings.

We came to a bridge, and being superstitious, stopped to spit over it for luck. There was a silent fisherman beneath it, a long lanky youth wearing a brown and battered hat and a suit to match of country cloth. He looked discomposed at our inspection. I think that he did not like Archie. I was singing, and it might have been that. Many people, even foreigners, have no true love for music.

I saw in this fortunate encounter an opportunity for me to practice the language. Also the elation of my spirits suggested that I might see how a fine old cruster (consult *Josepho Milleri*) would sound, put into the German of Herr Ollendorf.

So I stopped singing, and laboriously constructed the sentence.

I said, so far as I can now remember, "Did you go under that bridge because the trouts get under it to keep out of the wet?"

At the time I thought that pretty good, and if you have ever tried to joke in a foreign tongue, I think you will agree with me.

The fisherman looked up calmly. He took us in bit by bit. He sized us up. He measured us through and through. He did not, apparently, think much—of Archie. Then he opened his mouth and answered:

"As I am neither a fish (he looked at his line) nor a fool (he actually nodded at me), I came in under the bridge to keep myself dry!"

Archie and I did not understand much German, but we had no difficulty in comprehending that.

"You Yap! Let's get away from here!" said Archie, more gloomily still.

So we moved away from there, and left the lank fishing under the bridge.

Thus we became first acquainted with Kristen Mals.

We put up at his father's house that night—two wet bedraggled foreigners. Presently, as we warmed our beds (when wet always warm the back first, and then sit down) at the genial blaze of resin knobs in the narrow red-brick kitchen grate, Kristen came in with his string of fish.

Now if either of us had made so good a reply to a traveler who had mistaken us for a "greeny," we would never have rested till we had told it to the whole village. But not so Kristen. He appeared to have entirely forgotten the matter. Neither by look nor gesture, neither by direct reference nor by sly side-hit, did Kristen ever make allusion to the taming of our pride on the bridge. Probably he never knew the depths of our humiliation. For to his infinite loss he had been born in a land where there are no comic papers, and where, when a joker does appear once in a century, he is promptly cut off in the flower of his youth by six inches of broad-bladed knife in a place where it is more comfortable to bestow one's dinner.

As the days went by we found Kristen more and more of a brick. He possessed a Swiss army rifle—the first, worst and most rickety magazine rifle ever invented,

Sometimes it utterly failed to go off at all; and when it did, the Fetali sprayed the bullets about promiscuously, as if it had been fitted at the end of a garden "hose" for watering flower beds.

For all that Kristen was a fine hunter. Of that there could be no question. He had shot three bears on the mountains the winter before. He had been the death of innumerable chamois since September. He was always the best shot (with his father's gun, however, not with the too generous Fetali) at the local Shooting Unions. And when he won a prize or hit anything he said nothing about it. Yet when provoked his tongue could be as deadly as his father's gun.

There was a youth who had left the valley of Cavalocecia to "clerk" in the railway works at Milan. He returned with a wide knowledge of Italian manners of the baser sort, a way of speaking about women, and a four-inch collar about his neck, which, taken in the aggregate, moved the alternate awe and hatred of the youth of the valley.

Among so many accomplishments he had forgotten many of the names of objects familiar to him in his childhood.

In an evil hour he encountered Kristen Mals in the village street. It was at the bridge where the gray beards were in session, and when over every beard there depended a three-foot pipe. As Kristen Mals came along, with his load of beet-root in the little family donkey-cart, the shafts of the wagon fixed with a wooden cross-piece through the great leather collar, he looked a typical simpleton.

The Milano railway clerk scented easy game. There were also six girls at the well within earshot, two of them good-looking. He settled his collar and cleared his throat to call attention to his cleverness.

"Ha," he said, "how strange. How wonderful! Why, Sir Assdriver, do you have so small a donkey and so large a collar?"

Kristen took one keen eye-shot at his persecutor as he stood smart and scented, flicking his trousers with a swagger cane, and pulling up the three-inch starched band of linen about his neck.

"That's easy," he said simply. "The more large the donkey, the more large the collar he must wear!"

The remains were removed to the mortuary for Christian burial.

Such was Kristen Mals, son of Johann of Old Shules, farmer, (very small) proprietor, wood-forester, and poacher on three realms—an empire, a kingdom and a republic.

Archie and I agreed in loving Kristen and in rejoicing that we had found so entirely suitable a winter abode. It was about the only thing that we did agree in. Yet I was grateful to the most confiding relative who had intrusted Archie to my charge. He was American Minister to the Court of St. James, and if ever an empire or kingdom, from that of Charlemagne to that of the most gracious majesty of Victoria, the Queen, had a more noble and distinguished ambassador than Henry Clay Courtland, I have yet to hear of that court.

For myself, I am the subject and willing taxpayer of an effete monarchy, but Archie's uncle gave me a belief in the ability of democracy to raise the noblest and courtliest gentleman in the world which will last my time. Simple he was too, with such instinctive kindly dignity of speech and demeanor that it made one better simply to receive you—simple, great, unassuming, looking level-eyed and uncondescending at the shoulching national tramp, level-eyed and unafraid at the emperor of

a thousand legions—that was Henry Clay Courtland, gentleman, hero, prince, if you will, a descendant of the best blood in Virginia.

And yet we winked, as for the first time we stood together in his presence, Archie and I. He committed Archie, he said, to my care as to a distinguished student of a distinguished seminary of learning. He, Henry Clay Courtland, Ambassador to the Court of St. James, and so without fear, knowing the sterling qualities which animated my soul. He told Archie, in words which might have moved life-sentencing convicts, that he was to yield all reasonable obedience to me, who had to be responsible for his training, moral and physical, during the next three years.

And Archie and I looked each other over and winked. I regret it deeply. I was young then, and Archie scarcely a year younger than I. It is a poor excuse—a shuffle rather. Our sentiments were not on the level of those of the great and noble gentleman and distinguished ornament of the circle of ambassadors.

“Wonder if I can lick the cub? I was asking myself, as I looked the stalwart young ex-tiger of Princeton over, and wished I could pinch his muscle once to see.

“Can I stand up to that raw-boned Scot?” Archie was saying to himself; “it all depends on our first tussle.”

We caught one another’s eye; it was at this point that we winked.

For all that, the ambassador’s final words came to us, mellow and gracious, humble too, and sweet with the simplicity of a great nature.

“And I bid you good by, lads. Once I was young

But, at any rate, these were the conditions when Archie, Kristen and I went forth to climb and to slay athwart the pines and rubble heaps of Cavaloecia. We climbed a sight more than we slew. And, truth to tell, I liked the climbing much better than the slaying. If I shot anything I always hid behind a rock to let somebody else go first and let the life out of the poor thing lying there, gasping and bleeding on the snow.

And the result was this. By good luck I shot the first chamois of the season, and I ran, with my heart in my mouth (both heart and mouth as dry as tinder), to secure my game. The wounded chamois was of the gentler sex, and she turned on me a pair of eyes, tender, terrified, reproachful, and—yes, I declare it, loving—such eyes as had belonged to the woman I had once thought the fairest that ever the sun shone on. And the chamois did look at me with such a sad, uncomplaining, uncomprehending reproach, as she panted out her failing breath and her blood stained the snow, that I felt myself like the murderer of my first sweetheart, and would gladly have welcomed the gallows, to end and expiate my crime. Yet because there was none other, I had to use my knife to put a sharp period to her agony and mine.

But as the blood gushed out, and the dying, womanly eyes turned to mine in a last agony of reproach, I had killed my last chamois, and become no more than the spectator of the hunting of others.

Yet for Archie’s sake I kept on. The blood of generations of huntsmen was in him as it could never have been in me. He loved the stealthy approach, the silent, painful stalk, the tremors of the final wait, and

If you look at the map (it must be a large one) till you light on the valley of Cavaloecia, you will see that its chain of small lakes terminates at the upper end in a large mountain-girt lake of six or seven miles in length and nearly two in width. It is the finest sheet of water in these regions, and at the time of which I speak was the loneliest and most remote. The hope of getting on the track of a bear kept us in the house of honest Johann Mals long after the winter had begun and the surrounding mountains were swathed in snow. I did not mind a bear, I thought—no danger of Bruin looking like my first sweetheart.

But it was three weeks before the lake froze completely over. Waterfowl would keep puddling the half-congealed water and disturbing the formation of the ice. Geese and swans lingered till they were forced to fly southward. No snow had fallen since the freezing of Lake Cavaloecia, and between white pine studded banks the six miles of shining black ice glittered seductively.

I remember what a glorious December night it was when, after supper, and just when Johann and his wife were preparing to depart bedward, it chanced that I looked out. The lake was too inviting.

“Archie, come for a skate down to New Shales,” I cried.

“Shan’t!” replied Archie, shortly, from the depths of half a dozen pillows, on which he was reading “Peter Simple.”

I felt that if Archie was permitted to defy his duly appointed tutor, all discipline would be at an end. And what of the ten commandments then.



SENT HIM OVER THE HEELS OF HIS SKATES WITH A CRASH LIKE THE FALL OF THE ENTIRE GABLE OF A HOUSE

like you. Be good; I need not tell you not to be too good. You won’t disappoint me in that way. But, at all events, be straight. Speak the truth always. And never say a word that you are not willing to step outside and back with your life. So my father taught me fifty years ago in Virginia. Be true to the comrade you have chosen, to the woman who does you the honor to choose you. Don’t get into a hole if you can help it; but if you do, don’t sit down and cry. Get out again. See it through. Keep a stout heart; don’t fight, but keep up your practice with the gloves; read your Bibles; don’t forget your prayers every night; and if ever you settle in Richmond, Va., join the First Presbyterian Church there. Till then write me every month; keep out of debt; send me your bills to settle. God bless you, lads!”

We didn’t think then, Archie and I. You can take your oath on that. Young men don’t kiss hands—at least not those of old Virginia gentlemen. But I tell you, boys, I for one wanted to black the boots of Henry Clay Courtland. Yes, I wanted, wanted it badly, too. And Archie did, too.

PART II

A CHASE ON THE ICE

At Old Shules, Kristen taught us the art of hunting on a grand scale, and for the swiftest and noblest game in Europe—the rarest and most strictly preserved.

Chamois and bear—these were our possibilities. Remember I am speaking of twenty years ago. And I have never been back since. All may be changed now.

the thrill of the rifle at the shoulder, as I did, but the brief red agony of the gralloch was the sweet essence of delight to him. Therein we differed. To be in at the death was his meat. It was my poison.

According to the laws of the canton, only one side of the valley could be legally hunted, and that for one or two months of the year. But a little thoughtfulness and ingenious application of the new Science of mountain telegraphy solved our difficulties. First, let it be said that Kristen was a friend of the manager of the telegraph apparatus at Old Shules. Second, there was but one government “jäger” in all the valley of Cavaloecia. Obviously, he could not be everywhere at one time. By communication with his fellows the telegraph master easily discovered the whereabouts of the government gamekeeper on any particular hunting morning. He was at Munda—well, it was obvious that he could not be at Spiss. Let us go to Spiss. So we hunted at Spiss. And the next day we had chamois flesh to roast at the house of Johann Mals in the village of Old Shules.

Moreover, if the worst came to the worst, there was always the peculiarity of the geographical position of Shules to fall back on.

Did the republican Oberjäger of the canton press us too closely, behold! the open door over the hills into Austria, where, ten to one, the Imperial Green Hunter was not on the spot. But even if he were, and had force enough to confiscate our rifles, a ten-mile walk would bring us into the realms of Il Re Galantuomo, where the daring poachers were safe from both the forest guard of Switzerland and the Kaiserlich huntsmen of the yellow and black.

So I reminded him how his uncle had committed his physical well-being into my hands, not to speak of his moral and mental.

“Hang my uncle, anyway,” growled Archie from the depths of Marryat.

Archie, I regret to say, had not the repose of manners which marks the caste of Courtland, Chicago and a businesslike father had corrupted him. So without further remonstrances I picked up a stout stick and went indoors to convince the young man that it was a wrong and reprehensible thing to hang his uncle. Besides which, I showed him that it was more than doubtful whether, according to the Constitution of all United States of America, an ambassador could legally be hanged, least of all by a near relative.

I conducted the argument with such spirit that in a few minutes Archie said that he ached for nothing so much as a skate in the pale moonlight. And Johann Mals was heard to say to his wife, as Archie went out to look for an embrasure, that he had always thought that the young foreigners were mad. Now he knew it.

But as soon as we had set white shining blade to the black sheen of the perfect ice, all thought of Marryat and bed cushions faded out of the heart of Archie Gordon.

“Whoopie!” he remarked with some spirit, “I wish Olive Homans was here. I tell you she’s a daisy little girl on skates. Bet you she and I would just make this place hum.”

Archie occasionally reverted to his native language. I did not pretend to understand it. But knowing that in his aboriginal Cook County there abode a charming playmate cousin of his yet younger youth, I let his remark pass without challenge.



For the first two miles down the lake there was no sound save the clean crisp ring of the skates, as the polished blade took the glassy surface with swing swift as the gliding of perfect machinery.

"Tell you what. This is the Bullyboy-with-the-glass-eye, and the big yellow dog on a string!" Archie cried. "Who are you making mouths at, Platface?"

At first I had no idea to what Archie referred. I only repeat what he said, but, since he shook his fist at the moon as he shouted the last epithet of opprobrium, it is probable that he referred to the pale goddess, sailing serenely, as is her wont, through infinite altitudes.

At top speed we passed a little pine-grown island on the lake edge—I giving it as wide a berth as possible, Archie seeing how close he could shave its snow-fringed pines. He sailed just a yard too near.

For it chanced that a sharp ledge of rock ran out a little way, and the ice had frozen over all except—well, that inch made all the difference! Archie's skate took the ridge. Archie described in person the beautiful mathematical curve known as a parabola and alighted head foremost in the fringing brushwood of the isle. Here, as he struck head downward in the snow and fallen branches, he said things better left unsaid. It was well that Mistress Olive Homans, attractive cousin and good comrade, was not there.

I rescued Archie by hauling on one frozen foot as if it had been a mainsail. Yet young Chicago was far from grateful.

"Don't stand hew-hawing there like a celestial jackass!" he shouted.

A perfectly uncalled-for remark.

When we were once more on our way, the slight haze of snow dusted over the ice, which had veiled the fatal ridge from Archie, grew more pronounced. No more did the lake spread out before us an unbroken plain of glistening black. It had grown gray, and finally almost as white as the surrounding shores on which the snow had fallen before the freezing of the lake.

I was leading—owing entirely to Archie's fall and his tenderness about his knee-caps, one of which he stopped occasionally to rub in a ruefully caressing manner. Ordinarily my pupil could skate all round me, but on this occasion he fairly doated on his knee-cap. So, while he caressed, I led.

In the meridian splendor of the moon every blown twig and crack through which the water had oozed lay plain in our path as in the daylight. One could have read ordinary type at arm's-length, so clear it was. The light from above seemed to unite on the page with the reflection from the snow.

I saw before me as we raced broad flat tracks, each with the sharp mark of a claw at the end of the toe. Four of these had cut into the snow at every wide, lounging step.

"Bear tracks, by the holy poker!"

The words were the words of Princetonian Archie, but the voice was that of Archie's tutor—which shows certainly how evil communications may corrupt good manners.

The next moment we were racing along at top speed—following the broad plainly-blotted-on the sparsely-sprinkled snow.

Suddenly I stopped—I do not mean as Archie did on the island, but of my own accord. It struck me that if we were to go bear hunting, it might be as well to have something more deadly than a pair of *acme* skates and a pocket-handkerchief to kill him with if he should prove nasty when it came to the interview.

"Say, Archie," cried I, "look here! You wait and watch for the bear, and I'll go back for a rifle."

"No—you don't," said Archie, instantly, "if anybody goes back for a gun I do. If the bear was to eat me Uncle Courtland would give you fits. He'd have you outlawed, and maybe shot. But if it was only you the bear chewed up, it's only one Britisher the less, and George W. used to kill lots of them."

I have reason to believe that the misguided youth referred to the Father of his Country.

So to Old Shuler Archie skated back at top speed, having forgotten all about the tenderness to his knee-cap, and in half an hour he was back with two little light Martini rifles, bought from the original maker in Zurich—and, what was more to the point, with Kristen Mals and his big pepper-pot Fetali. Archie told me, as we glided along, how Kristen had tried to "sneak" his father's muzzle-loading hunting rifle, but the old man kept it over his bed, and Kristen knew that if he told his father he would not let him go after the bear till all could start fair.

So he had to put up with his own old pepper-pot.

Archie and I ran down the bear tracks with admirable impetuosity, now that so redoubtable a hunter as Kristen was with us. We were not afraid before, but we wanted to let Kristen have the credit. It was Kristen who saw the black speck on the snow. It was Kristen who was first in pursuit. It was Kristen who was sitting down to take his skates off in order to continue the chase on land, when the bear, evidently alarmed by the

blade on the left the lake at full speed shelter of the

It was not another, who, quarry, as he to escape, clapped his rifle to his blazed away, refuse to say sportsman

I will say, that his failure to hit the bear was atoned for, in the estimation of his companions, by the beautiful star his head made on the ice as the recoil of the Martini sent him over the heels of his skates with the crash like the fall of the entire gable of a house.

After this it was with somewhat shattered faculties, owing to laughter and other causes, that our expedition moved on its way. Kristen had been seen to smile, and helpless laughter temporarily disabled another of the party—the one who had not made the star on the ice.

The bear, which had been seen plainly enough as it crossed the white fringe of the pine forest, had now disappeared. But with Kristen to guide us the task of tracing him was easy enough in the deep shadows and under the uncertain light of the moon.

Our hearts were beating a little quickly, and a longing to see the skin of the bear made into a rug possessed us (speaking for myself) as we followed Kristen up into the pine woods.

In the strip of dark forest in which we found ourselves had been at some time long past the resting-place of an earth slide or avalanche of rocks and stones. These were lying all about in inextricable confusion. Some of the great square blocks were the size of cottages, some approached more nearly the dimensions of drygoods boxes, but between them and among were lovely caves and dark recesses—a perfectly beautiful wilderness to play hide and seek in.

But not with an able-bodied bear of ferocious habits and unpleasing temper to play first hide.

Suddenly Kristen remembered a neighboring peasant had built a cow shed a few hundred yards to the left of the edge of the wood. He thought it was quite on the cards that his bearship might have gone there to call upon the inmates.

We followed him to the little wooden shed only to

find the door beaten down and the stalls empty. But a heavy trail, dark with blood, led into the forest some way lower down.

It was evident that Bruin had been there before us. So, with rifles at the ready, we followed cautiously. We had not far to go. There in the first patch of shadow lay the half devoured body of a calf, which had been left alone to recover from some disease in the detached outhouse.

"He cannot have gone far after a kill and a meal like that!" said Kristen over his shoulder.

We pursued our way again into the tumbled country of the landslide. There were broad tracks everywhere about.

"We had better scatter and find him!" said Kristen invitingly.

I did not quite see the necessity, but it was not for me to say. We came to a dismal cave mouth—a most likely hiding-place, and Kristen was just making ready to enter. I was cautiously examining the most likely places where *not* to find the bear. Archie was making sure of his cartridge for the hundredth time, when suddenly, peacefully meandering through the glade in the full moonlight, the bear himself ambled into sight, calm as if he had come out to pay an afternoon call.

Down went Kristen on one knee. The thirteen repeating went Fetali to crack and sputter, and the snow in front to fly to right and left. The bear half turned about, intent to flee from a neighborhood where the rate of mortality was so high. But by chance one of the bullets hit him somewhere and checked his intention.

He rose on his hind legs, smiting his chest like an orator appealing to his conscience. Then he dropped heavily down again on his forefoot, and seeing Kristen kneeling and trying to force up the lever, he charged straight at him with open mouth. A cartridge had jammed, and it was about equal chances whether it would refuse to go off at all, or go off at the wrong point and blow magazine, breech and all into old iron and everlasting smash.

Archie was away behind a tree trying to find a squirrel. I stood well off to the side as the bear charged Kristen with open red mouth, roaring with a coughing growl which was unpleasant to hear. I was mighty glad that he did not see me.

But as he went by I had the presence of mind to let off my rifle into his side. At the same moment the Fetali exploded. The lever had at last been driven home and Kristen had pulled the trigger with the same movement. The bear rolled over, clamped his teeth together two or three times, drew up his legs, opened his claws like a cat purring—and was dead.

There is not much more to tell except that I fell through a hole in the ice on our way home. Kristen fished me out, saying that it was a good thing that I had thrown my Martini away before I went down. It would have got wet. The keen air promptly froze me into an ice-armed crusader, and I was thawed out with hot coffee from the hospitable hands of Frau Mals on my return.

Kristen duly obtained the government reward (three hundred francs, I think), and finding the beast of record size for these parts, he got Bruin conveyed down to the nearest large towns on a sledge and showed him at ten centimes a head at a booth in the market-places. In this way he achieved quite a competence, on which he resolutely declined to wed the fairest (or indeed any other) maid of the village, saying that what was enough for one was by no means enough for two.



DRAWN BY G. VERBECK



Painted by Louis Loeb

CHRISTMAS IN THE SOUTH—BEFORE THE WAR

WHEN Christmas times dey comes along,
It's den I takes my stan';
My voice I lif' fer Christmas gif'
Fum my ole Marster's han'.
'En my ole Miss—she come along
En hear me sing dat Christmas song:
My voice I lif'
Fer Christmas gif'—
Oh, don't you do me wrong!



De darkies fum de cabins come
En lif' dey hat—like dis!
"Christmas gif', ole Marster—
Christmas gif', ole Miss!"
En den I gits my dram, en den
I dances with de yuther men:
My voice I lif'
Fer Christmas gif'—
I'se happy once agen!

FRANK L. STANTON.



WHEN THE DOOR OPENED-?

By SARAH GRAND

WHAT curious glimpses of life one catches sometimes unawares, scenes that flash forth distinctly from the tangled mass of movement, the crowded details, the inextricable confusion of human affairs as they appear to the looker-on in a great city! Seen amid all the turmoil, from a hansom cab, from the top of an omnibus, from the platform of an underground station in a train that stops for a minute, from the pavement in a carriage blocked in the stream of traffic, by day and night, from out of the routine, the commonplace doings of people in the commonplace moods and phases, which weave themselves into the length of wholesome lives, they stand out to view, these intervals of intensity, the beginnings of episodes—tragic, heroic, amorous, abject; or the conclusions, which make the turning point, the crisis of a life. If it be the beginning, how one aches to know what the end will be; and if it be the end, what would one not give for the first part! Yet tantalizing as these fragments are, they possess a charm which is not in the finished story, and are recollected with vivid interest long after many a tale, begun at the beginning and rounded to a satisfactory conclusion, has lapsed from the mind like a thing that is done with and forgotten.

For instance, I was coming home alone late one night by train from a distant suburb, and happened to get into a carriage with three other people. One of them was a man of about forty, with dark hair going gray, and a pleasant, clean cut, well-disciplined face. The other two were husband and wife, the husband being a good deal older than the wife. There seemed to have been some disagreement between the pair before I got into the carriage, for the lady looked sulky and dejected, while the gentleman was a good deal ruffled. He spoke a word or two to the other passenger, however, in a way which showed that they were acquainted, and also, as it seemed to me, for the purpose of keeping up appearances. The lady, on the contrary, made no attempt to disguise her feelings, but sat silent and rigid, staring into the darkness, until the train stopped, when her husband grimly handed her out, and I was left alone with the third passenger.

We watched the pair walk off together, and it was obvious that the quarrel recommenced before they had taken many steps. My solitary fellow-passenger sat opposite to me, and when the two had passed out of sight, our eyes met in an involuntary glance of intelligence, and he shrugged his shoulders slightly.

"I should like to give that pair a piece of advice," slipped from me unawares.

"Ah!" he said, sighing, "so should I; but it is an impossible thing to do in such cases."

"I suppose you are thinking that people know their own business best," I rejoined.

"No, I am not," he answered. "The lookers-on see most of the game, you know. But nevertheless it is worse than useless to offer advice to a married pair—especially when they are both wrong headed," he added. "But even right-headed people, with the best intentions, make terrible mistakes; and in their own cases too, when they might be expected to know what they are about. Now that man who was here just now watches his wife, and keeps her shut up, or only allows her out under escort, as if he thought that she would certainly misconduct herself if ever she had an opportunity. The consequence is that she is growing to dislike and despise him, and he may drive her in the end to do the very thing he dreads and is guarding against. I cannot understand how a man can care to have a bond slave, always under orders, for a wife. Personally, I prefer a free woman; and I should be sorry to think that liberty means license in any but exceptional cases."

"But there, it seems to me, that a difficulty arises," I observed. "How is a man to tell which will prove an exceptional case?"

"Oh, I should think there is no difficulty about that," he answered. "Girls give indications of character early enough. And, at any rate, if they are not trustworthy, dogging them about won't make them so. I don't say, however, that a young and thoughtless girl should be cast entirely upon her own resources; only, what she wants is a companion, not a keeper. However, as I said just now, the right ordering of married lives is a matter in which even the best-intentioned people may make mistakes. I married a girl somewhat younger than myself—about ten years—not that I think that makes any difference if people agree in their tastes. It so happened, however, that we did not agree. I am fond of a quiet life, with full leisure for art and literature, and dislike nothing so much as killing time in idle chatter at entertainments where one is not entertained. My wife, on the contrary, as I found out very soon after we were married, is positively bored by books and pictures, and is never so happy as when she is in the full whirl of the social Maestrom. Well, I thought the matter out, and the justice of the case seemed to me to demand that she should not require me to go into society, and that I should not require her to stay at home. We were fond of each other, but I could not see why, on that account, either of us should have our life spoiled by being made to conform to the uncongenial tastes and habits of the other. Marriage must be a perfect institution when there is entire similarity

of interests; but if there is not, I cannot see why people should be miserable. There is time enough for each of the pair to occupy themselves in their own way during the twenty-four hours, and meet often enough to be happy together as well. In fact, I don't know that it isn't the only chance of happiness in such a case for them to order their lives in that way. They keep in touch better by drifting apart and meeting again with minds refreshed and something to say to each other. So I let my wife go her way and I went mine, and the plan seemed to be an answer, especially. There were times when she would have liked me to go out with her, and there were times when I should have been glad if she had stayed at home with me; and occasionally we conformed to one another's secret wishes in these respects, but I cannot say that the self-sacrifice was much of a success. There was one fancy-dress ball—a public affair—that she particularly wanted to go to, and I thought she half hinted that I should accompany her; if so, I did not take the hint, I knew I should be so bored.

"She went to that ball rather conspicuously well dressed in a silver-gray domino, lined with pale pink, and trimmed with white lace. Her fan was white ostrich feathers, and her mask was fringed with lace, which concealed her mouth. She had been quite excited about going, but when it came to the point she did not seem to be so very eager after all. She was to meet some friends there, and I said I would sit up for her, and she promised not to be late.

"After she had gone, I felt depressed somehow. I got a book and a cigar, but did not find either of them in the least absorbing. My mind wandered when I tried to read, and I had to give it up at last, and just

settle myself to smoke, and think things out.

"I began to wonder what my wife was doing at the ball, and if she had found her friends all right. Then it occurred to me that it would be very awkward if they

did not meet by some mistake. All kinds of people go to these public balls, and manners are apt to be free-and-easy when masks are worn. My wife, even in her domino, gave the impression of youth and good looks. She might be subjected to some annoyance from the rounders who haunt such places. At that moment she might be dancing with some very undesirable partner. Had I done right to let her go alone? I threw my cigar into the fireplace, and got up, but without any distinct idea. In fact, I stood for a little, as one does sometimes in a difficulty, with all thought suspended. Then I recollect a fancy-dress I had had for a ball I went to before I met my wife. It was the black velvet costume of a Spanish Don of the period of Philip IV., the Velasquez period, a handsome dress copied from a pict-



"THERE WAS A FANCY DRESS BALL SHE WANTED TO GO TO"



DRAWN BY A. B. WENZELL

"THE WOMAN BEFORE ME WAS A PERFECT STRANGER!"



dress and go to the ball also? My wife had taken the carriage, but there were some livery-stables near, and I could easily get a brougham. I rang for my man, and sent him to fetch me one.

"The ball was in full swing when I arrived, but by great good luck almost the first person I saw was my wife. The silver-gray, pale pink, white lace and white ostrich feather fan made an easily distinguishable costume, and I recognized her at once, and made my way through the crowd toward her. But as I approached, I realized that she could not possibly recognize me. She had never seen me in that dress, she probably did not even know that I had it; yet, although I was walking straight up to her, and she saw that I was, she made no sign of objection. Was it possible that she would let a strange man speak to her, and even encourage him to do so by her attitude? The horrible doubt shot such a pang through my heart that I determined to set it at rest forever by making the experiment. Without waiting to ask myself whether it was a fair or an unfair thing to do, I addressed her in a feigned voice familiarly.

"I fancy that you are waiting for me," I said. "Please say that you are."

"Well, I am waiting for something exciting to happen," she answered, also disguising her voice, and speaking with the easy assurance of one who is accustomed to such encounters; "for standing here alone is not lively."

"For a moment the tawdry splendor of the scene was blotted out. I could neither see nor hear. I recovered myself, however, just as the band struck up, and asked her mechanically if I might have the pleasure of a dance.

"I shall be delighted," she replied, taking my arm at once, and leading me, rather than waiting to be led, through the motley crowd about us to the ballroom, in a free and easy way that filled me with consternation. In her right mind, she had always seemed to be reserved with strangers, and I should never have imagined that a mask would have made such a difference.

"She danced with the abandonment of a ballet girl, and, when the music ceased, she asked me for ice and liqueur, and showed me the way to the refreshment room. When she had had all she wanted, and it was a good deal, she took my arm again, and we began to walk about. She seemed to know all the ins and outs of the place, which surprised me, for I did not suppose that she had ever been there before. I asked her, however,

"Have I ever been here before?" she ejaculated. "I should just think so! I come whenever I can."

"Do you tell your husband?" I ventured.

"Oh, my husband!" she exclaimed. "But who told you that I had a husband, by the way?"

"I feel sure that a lady of your personal attractions and charms of manner cannot fail to have a husband," I answered.

"Ah, courtier," she said, "heigho! What a differ-

ence there is between husbands and lovers! Aren't women fools to marry if they can make love for a livelihood?"

"She clasped her hands around my arm as she spoke, and looked up into my face altiringly. Was this the true woman, I wondered, and was that other to whom I was accustomed only an actress earning her living? No, I could not believe it. I argued with myself that the manner and sentiments were assumed with the dress, that they were part of the masquerade. But she could not have done it so well without much experience, and she confessed that she came here often, which argued deceit, for I had never had a hint of it. Indeed, the reason she gave me for going that night was that she had never been to a mask-ball. Oh, thrice accursed fool that I was to let her come alone! Yet perhaps it was just as well. I knew that she was frivolous, but had never suspected that she was fast. Indeed, I would have wagered my soul that she was to be trusted anywhere, so she had taken me in finely, and it was just as well that I should know it. Doubtless my friends had known it all along, and pitied me for a blind weak fool. But it was a shock, I can tell you, and I was in two minds the whole time. In the one I condemned her utterly, in the other I was trying to excuse her. Appearances were all against her certainly; but the habit of love and respect is not to be changed in a moment. And, after all, what had she done that could not be excused? She had talked in a vulgar way certainly, but I had not presumed upon it. If I had taken the slightest liberty, doubtless she would have resented it promptly. Would she?

"Her hand was resting on my arm. I hesitated a moment, then took it, and pressed it. To my horror, she laughed, and returned the pressure.

"You are waking up, Don Sombre," she said. "I was beginning to fear that you were one of the 'doomed to dumps,' you were so cold and dull. But the dumps don't last long when I'm about. I'll soon cheer you up, and put some life in you."

"I felt a horrid emotion at these words, and it was some moments before I could master my voice. I was a broken man, and longed to sit down and cry like a child. It was sorrow that had come upon me, not anger. One is not angry where there is no hope, one is crushed. And yet, although I knew there was no hope, I was like a gambler who must stake again. I determined to go a little further just to give her a last chance.

"You have cheered me to such good purpose that I do not feel inclined to part with you," I said; "but this crowd is distracting. Let us get out of it. I have a carriage waiting, will you come home with me?"

"Why, he's quite nervous," she said, laughing. "Now, that is nice, for I could swear, Don Sombre, that you're not accustomed to 'No' from a lady."

"Why is it nice?" I asked.

"Well, you wouldn't be nervous if you were indifferent, you know," she said, archly. "I can't stand your cold-blooded creatures who don't care a button either way."



"Then I ought to please you," I answered, grimly, "for as you rightly perceive, I do care greatly. Will you come?"

"She laughed again. Good heavens, was that acquiescence? I drew her toward the main entrance with the impetuosity of a young lover, and she did not demur. She remarked that I seemed to be impatient, and impatient I was. Every moment was an hour of pain until the ghastly farce was over. But I could not end it there and then. It was too serious—I must get her home. I went down the street myself to fetch my hired brougham so that my name might not be called out, and I told the man to go back before I returned to hand her in. I was afraid of a scene in that public place if she suddenly discovered who I was, and it seemed an interminable time until we started. We were clear of the crowd, and off at last, however, but for the first few minutes I sat beside her unable to utter a word, and she began to rally me again on the subject of my gloom. Then she fell up against me, but whether because the carriage lurched, or out of mere wantonness, I could not tell. However, I put my arm round her, and she did not object.

"Where do you live?" she asked, as we neared the house. "These streets are all alike, and I cannot tell in the least where I am."

"Well, we are there, at any rate," I answered, as the carriage stopped. I handed her out, and opened the door with my latch-key. The light was so low in the hall, I had to take her hand to lead her up to the drawing-room. There all was darkness, but I had matches in my pocket, and lighted the gas.

"Then I turned to her. She was giggling at something, but did not seem to see where she was."

"Now, madam," I said sternly, "we will unmask."

"In a moment she had taken hers off, and slipped out of her domino.

"I gazed, I gasped, I fell into a chair. For the woman before me was a perfect stranger—a creature with dyed hair, blackened eyelids, and painted cheeks—not the sort of person to be seen with anywhere if one valued one's reputation, and yet I could have gone down on my knees, and kissed the hem of her garment so great was my relief. I shall never forget it! For the first few minutes I could think of nothing, do nothing, but just sit there gazing at her, and smiling idiotically. She was flattered by my attitude, which she mistook for speechless admiration, and she stood still, posing in a theatrical manner, with an affectation of coyness, until I recovered myself.

"My first clear idea was that I must get rid of her; but how to do it without offering her any indignity? I was casting about in my mind for a plausible excuse; but before anything occurred to me, a carriage stopped at the door below. I heard a key turned in the lock, then the rustle of silk, and a light step on the staircase. My wife had returned early as she had promised, and was coming straight up to the drawing-room.

"Her hand was already on the handle of the door—"

He broke off at this point and looked out of the window. The train had stopped, but we had not noticed it at the moment.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, "this is my station!" and out he jumped just as we were moving off again.

I have never seen him since, I do not suppose that I ever shall; so I expect that all my life long I shall be tormented with conjectures as to what happened when that door opened.



What People Drank in Shakespeare's Time

BY EDMUND GOSSE



WHEN the Elizabethan gentleman or lady, clown or drudge, woke up in the morning, there was neither tea, coffee nor chocolate to brace him or her to the exertions of the day. Everybody, it would seem, quenched thirst and accompanied the meal of breakfast with ale. It was probably very thin. In

some parts of the south of England, particularly in Wiltshire, you will to-day be offered in remote places what is called "table-beer," a faint and nauseous decoction of malt, resembling whey in appearance. No doubt, the ale so universally drunk in England three hundred years ago much resembled this innocuous liquor. But it would greatly differ in different houses, for almost every one, of any pretensions, brewed beer at home. The old books of the household are full of minute directions for the practices of malting and brewing. Barley was the usual basis of malt, but Gervase Markham recommends oats also, and says that housewives were in the habit of using wheat, pease, lupins and vetches, also; he does not advise us to do this, unless barley be quite unattainable.

Only two distinct kinds of ale were recognized; namely, this ordinary beer, and the stronger kind, called March beer. The innumerable instances in the poets where the alehouse is spoken of, and where men sit on the stone seat outside this building, refer, it would

appear, to the second of these. When the table-beer, which was quite good enough to quench thirst, did not seem to offer due exhilaration, men went to the alehouse to drink March beer. This was brewed in March or April, and was not supposed to be fit to drink till it had been kept three or four years. The innovation of bottled ale was the result of an accidental discovery on the part of a very learned person, Dr. Alexander Nowell, who was Dean of St. Paul's during the greater part of Elizabeth's reign. He was all through life a very ardent fisherman; on his portrait, painted when he was ninety-five years of age, he caused himself to be styled *Piscator hominum*, "fisher of men," in a punning sense. Dean Nowell was in the habit of taking his beer with him when he went on a fishing excursion, and one hot summer's day, having tightly corked the bottle, he hid it among the damp grass.

When he came back, and opened it, he was amazed to find it in a state of high effervescence; he also found this frothy liquid much improved as a beverage, and so bottled beer was discovered. A very few years after this we



and it a recognized drink, and highly popular. We must also think of people, in the western countries, as drinking wine and perry, much as they do to the present day. But the great drink in Elizabethan times was wine, mostly in forms not known to us any longer. We must remember that there was no champagne in those days, and that port did not begin to make its appearance in England until about 1630. But the importation of wine from France, Spain and Germany was very large indeed, and must have formed one of the principal sources of revenue. As appears to be certain, wine for the Sacrament had been largely grown in the south of England during medieval times. Either the climate was very different from what we now enjoy, or, which seems more likely, an extremely poor liquid, so long as it was indubitably vinous, was considered good enough for the particular purpose of the Mass. By the sixteenth century, however, the growth of wine in England had entirely ceased, and we depended upon foreign countries for our supply. It will be found, in our long Continental wars, that the drink in fashion changed in accordance with our foreign policy. French wines, for instance, went completely out of use during our extended wars with France.

During the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, however, wine of all the principal varieties then in vogue was very generally consumed in England. The sweet wines were in great request, and that which seems to have been in most favor was malmsey or muscadel. In Fletcher's comedy of "The Captain," the host at the inn says to the hero:

"I love thee, next to malmsey in the morning,
Of all things transitory."

that being the finest compliment he could express. This was a "full, pleasant and well-hued" wine—to borrow a contemporary praise of it—which came from the islands of the Mediterranean. It had the musky flavor of what we now know as moselle, and was made from muscat grapes. It seems to have been of two kinds, one "great, pleasant and strong, with a sweet scent, and an amber color"; the other less potent, and deep red. A little malmsey of this old type is still made in the Isles of Greece. Malvoisie was another name for it in the seventeenth century. What was called muscadine, a drink greatly in favor, was a strange sort of manufacture of malmsey mixed with bastard in a butt, into which was then poured the yolks of eggs, milk, bay-salt and water, with a flavoring of cloves and aniseeds.

We have just referred to bastard. This was a composite wine extremely in use in Shakespeare's time and now difficult to reconstitute. It seems to have been a Levantine or Sicilian wine, very much of the original constitution of malmsey. When the good lads in Eastcheap, who called deep drinking "dying scarlet," went into the Bear's Head Tavern, we know on the best authority, that of Prince Hal himself, that they ordered "a pint of bastard." It was a very sweet wine, "fat, and the tawnier the better." We should have found it very little to our taste, for it was thick and muddy. Bastard never appeared on the table in its original state, but always, as Gervase Markham says, "adulterated and falsified with honey," so that it hardly differed, except in color, from the metheglin of which Ben Jonson speaks.

Much more to our taste would have doubtless been the Rhenish, of which Yorrick was once mad enough to pour a flagon over the Clown's head. These were white wines, not to be distinguished probably from the hocks which we drink to-day, although we do not recognize in the two sorts known to the Elizabethans, the Elstertune and the Barabant, any definite vintage now existing. But no European wine has a longer pedigree than some of the great hocks; there has been Johannisbürger, for instance, for nearly one thousand years.

Soon after Shakespeare's death, Rhenish wine went entirely out of use in England. This was probably due to the Thirty Years' War, which not merely devastated the vineyards and discouraged the vintners, but made the export of wine from Germany almost impossible. Even Rhenish was not always put on table pure; often it was muddled with honey, milk and cloves, then strained, and drunk when it was cold. These compositions took off the crudity of a rough vintage. A considerable amount of claret was drunk in England in the reign of Elizabeth, although references to it are not frequent. It was called Gascoigne wine, or Galloway; and it was shipped from Bordeaux in curious hogsheads, hooped with hazel. From La Rochelle was exported to England a good deal of Angouleme, a sharp white "hedge-wine," which no doubt resembled rather a poor Chablis or Sauterne.

All these varieties, however, sink into insignificance before the one great staple drink of the age of Shakespeare. When Falstaff went to the Garter Inn for a period of happy relaxation, it was not to waste his time over muscadine or Rhenish; it was to drink sack. His praise of "a good sherry-sack" is classical. It was to ascend into the brain and make it "apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and detestable shapes." Of all wines such was that which best warmed the blood; it was "the excellent endeavor of drinking good, and good store of fertile sherry," which had gradually made Prince Harry so valiant. Finally Falstaff sums up his noble laudation of this king of all Shakespearean wines by ejaculating, "If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them should be to forswear thin potations and to addict themselves to sack."

It is, perhaps, not unnecessary to remind some of our readers what sack was. In the first place, the original form of the word was "sack-wine," as our forefathers used to say "port-wine," and even "cherry-wine." The dictionaries explain that "sack-wine" was a corruption of "vin sec," and that in earlier times it was spelled "seck" in English. But it had ceased to be a dry wine in Shakespeare's time, or rather, although it arrived rough and clear, it was sweetened to the English taste before it was drunk. In its pure form, sack was very much like the sherry we import to-day from Spain, before it has been manipulated. The best sack was an indubitable sherry, for it came from Xeres, the town near Cadiz which still grows the vine to which it gives its name. One of the Elizabethan writers speaks of the charm of sack, "if it be sherry, as it should be." But there was as little hope that all the sack consumed in England should come from Xeres, as that all our brandy now should come from Cognac. All the strong white wines of the south came under this generic term.



There was a "small" sack, much appreciated at a low price, which was the growth of Galicia and Portugal, and was probably very much like the sharp, nutty wine that is grown to this day on the hilly vineyards of the Trasos Montes. A strong, heady sack, not so fine as the Xeres class, but with more body in it, came from the Canary Islands and from Malaga. This was the sort that Falstaff loved. But all white wines that were not Rhenish, whether sweet or dry, seem to have been included in the comfortable, genial designation "Sack."

The best sack, when it arrived in the port of London, was presumably what we should now call a light amontillado. But to drink it as it came would not suit the palate of English guests, so it underwent a remarkable series of adulterations and adaptations. If the color seemed too pale, nothing was thought of mixing malmsey with it, or even gascoigne. We can realize what this means by thinking what the effect would be of pouring several bottles of Burgundy and then of claret into a small cask of fine sherry. The amateur of to-day shudders at the thought. But the Elizabethans did worse than this; if there was too much color in their sack, they put in new milk, as much as three gallons to a butt. If the sack "raped," by which I think was meant, tasted rough and rasping to the tongue, they added rice flour and four grains of camphor. The species of sack called "alligant," which we may easily recognize as a wine of Alicante in Valencia, was espe-



cially troublesome; it required "four gallons of honey clarified, and the yolks of four eggs, whites and all, and beat it well, and fill it up, and stop it close, and it will be pleasant and quick as long as it is in drawing." So says a vivacious anonymous vintner, writing in 1615, and no doubt he knew what he was talking about. But the concoction was hardly what we should consider a neat, clean wine to-day.

It is not to be doubted that there was a great deal of drunkenness in England of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts. The poets habitually refer to it, and make tipsy men the constant butt of their satire. Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of "The Coxcomb," which has been performed in London this winter for the first time in more than two centuries, surprised us when we saw it on the boards by its protests against the abuse of wine; it might almost have passed for a temperance lecture. The troubles of the hero are all due to his having been unable to resist the temptation of "one quart of burnt sack" when he was "as cold as Christmas." He misses the heroine, in consequence, and walks through the rest of the play in wretchedness and remorse. At the close he finds his Vioia again, and calls himself, with amiable exaggeration, "a loathsome drunkard!"

"I do beseech you
To pardon all these faults and take me up
An honest, sober, and a faithful man!"

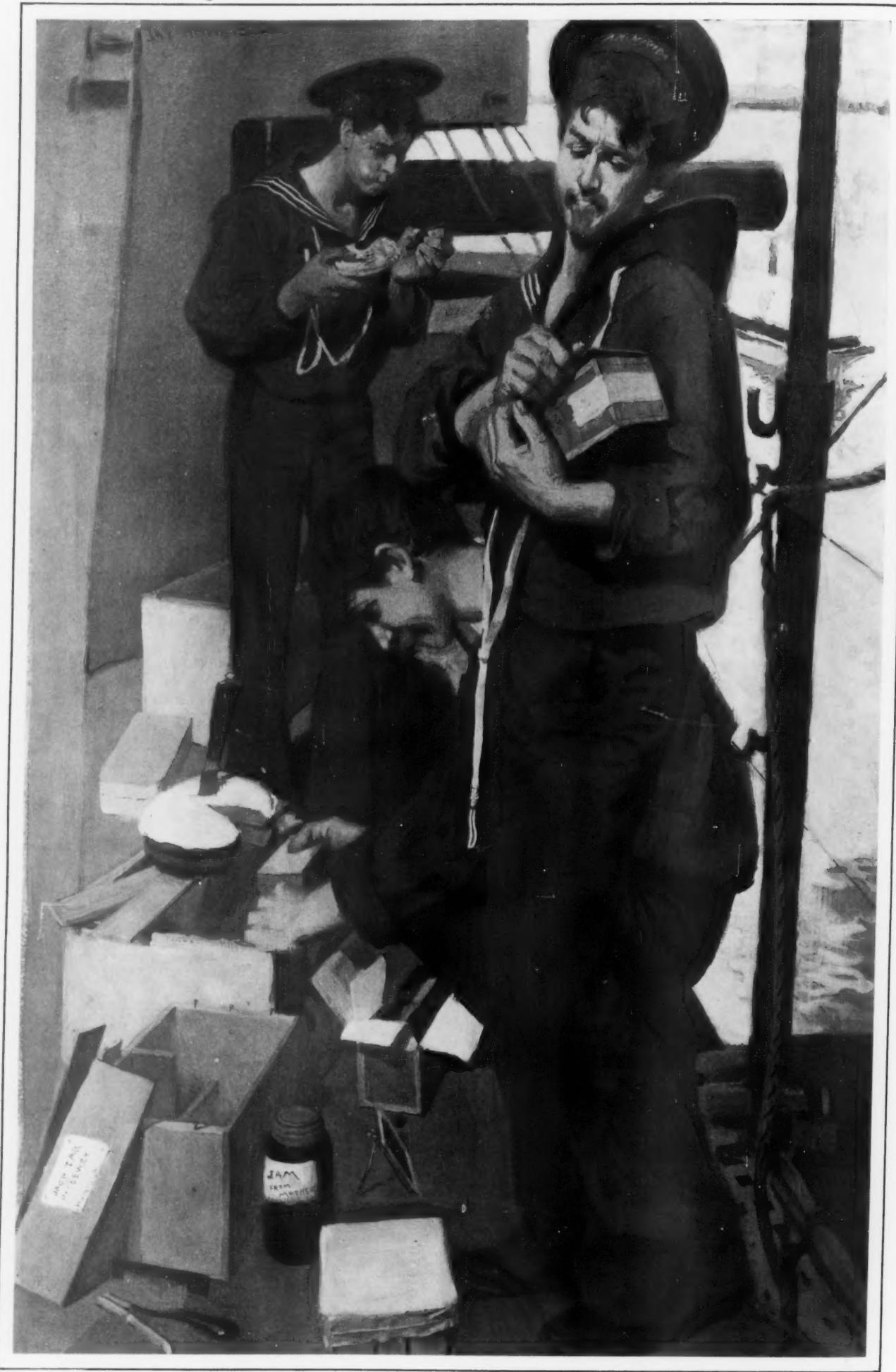
which she very considerably does. "The Coxcomb" is a tract against inebriety which the late Mr. Neal Dow might have approved of, but it is droll to find Beaumont and Fletcher among the prophets. I should perhaps explain that "burnt sack," this cause of the weakness of Riccardo, was what we call mulled wine. It was what Mrs. Quigley proposed to prepare when she offered to brew a pot of hot sack with eggs for the Knight.

One of the great incentives to violent and degrading drunkenness was, however, absent in Elizabethan society. The drinking of spirits was so rare as to be scarcely mentioned. Whisky was absolutely unknown; gin was not to be invented until the eighteenth century; rum, under the pleasing name of Kill Devil, is an invention of New England, and is not heard of until late in the seventeenth century. Nor do we find even the name of brandy in any writings of the age of Shakespeare. According to that eminent philologist, Dr. Murray of Oxford, the word "brandy" is first used in English in the year 1657. But we should be too sanguine if we supposed that the thing was equally unknown. Any fiery distilled spirit was called "aquavite," and this term covers a good deal that we should consider dram-drinking. The inevitable Falstaff carried a bottle of aquavite about with him in his pocket; it was sometimes called "brand-wine."

Aquavite, according to Dr. Timothy Bright's curious "Treatise of Melancholy," published in 1586, was distilled from the lees of wine. But the finer sort, which was really a liqueur, contained innumerable scented herbs and spices; and even atoms of pearl and of gold leaf floated in it. The Elizabethan household books give most elaborate recipes for making these and other similar distilled waters, of which the very finest was called imperial, and must have resembled benedictine. Cinnamon water, too, another favorite liqueur, is described by Markham as "a very principal aqua composta"; it contained mace, red rose leaves, balm, cinnamon and borage gathered on a fair sunny day. With these, and other such aromatic strong waters, our Elizabethan forefathers quickened their wasted spirits while they pledged Queen Gloriana.



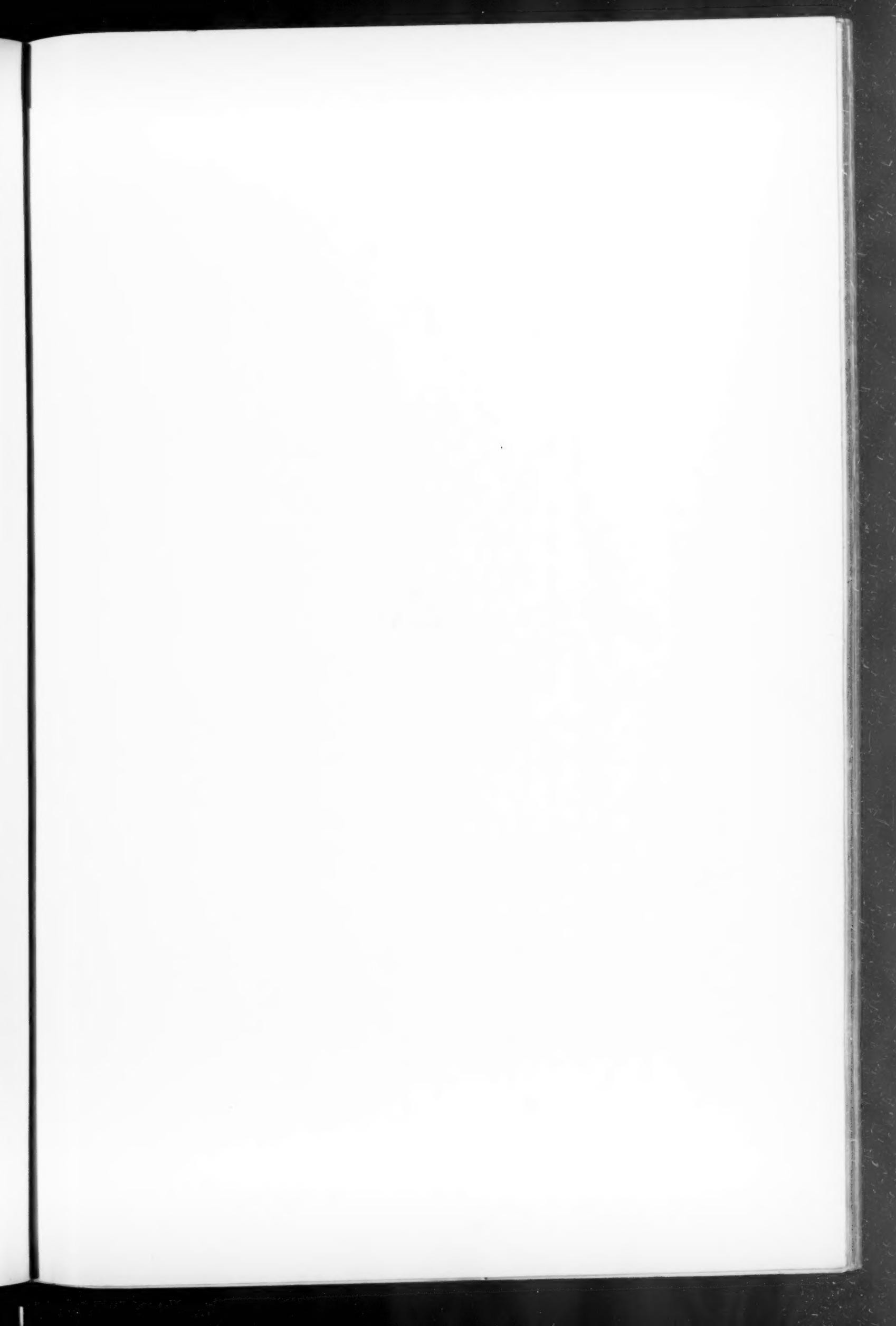
Drawings by Pamela Smith and G. W. E.



Painted by Jay Hambidge

"C/O DEWEY"

JACKIES OPENING THEIR CHRISTMAS BOXES ON THE OLYMPIA





PAINTED BY HOWARD PYLE

"UPON THE LAST STAGE OF THEIR JOURNEY THEY STOPPED FOR DINNER AT A TAVERN"





Supplement to Collier's Weekly
Christmas 1898

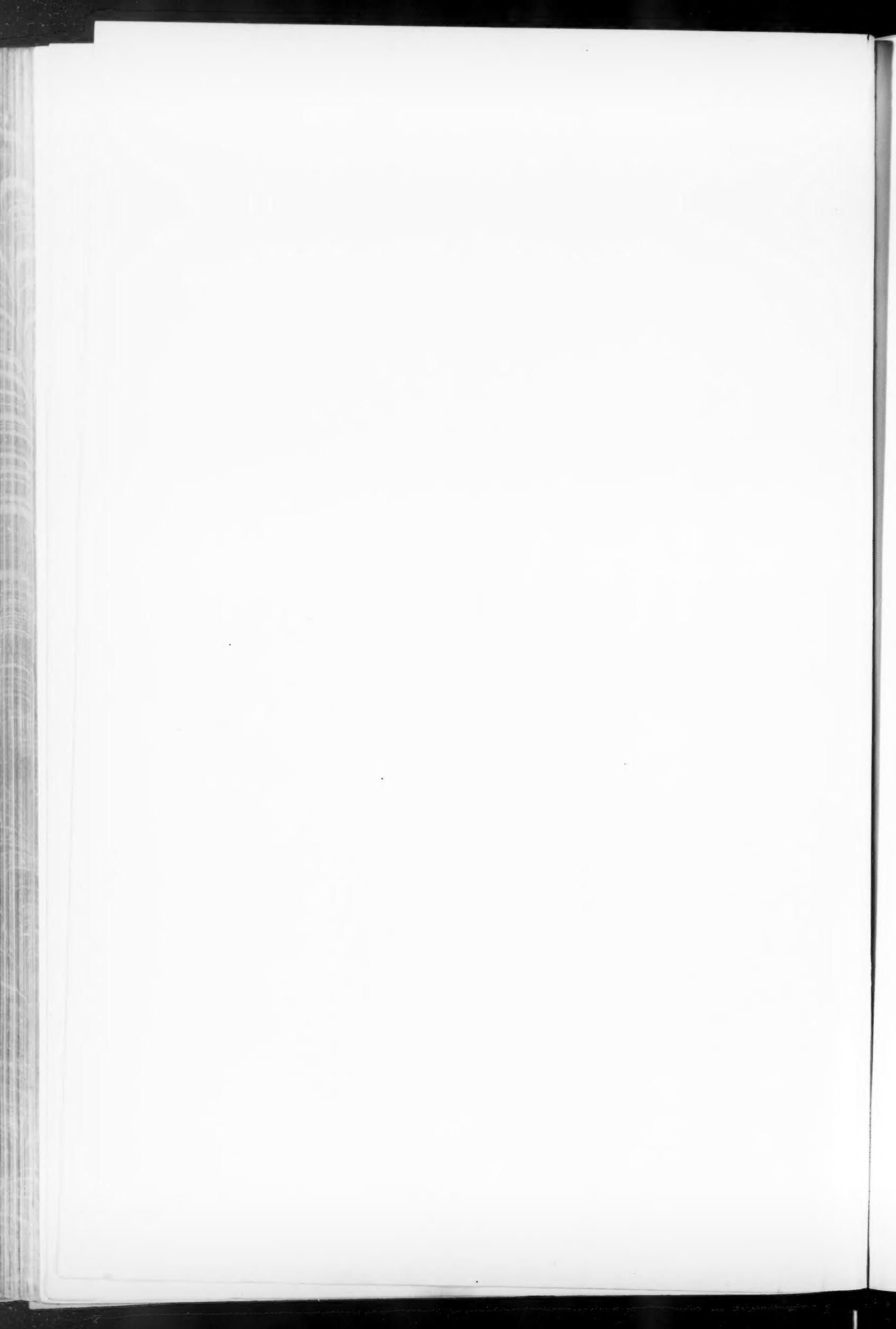
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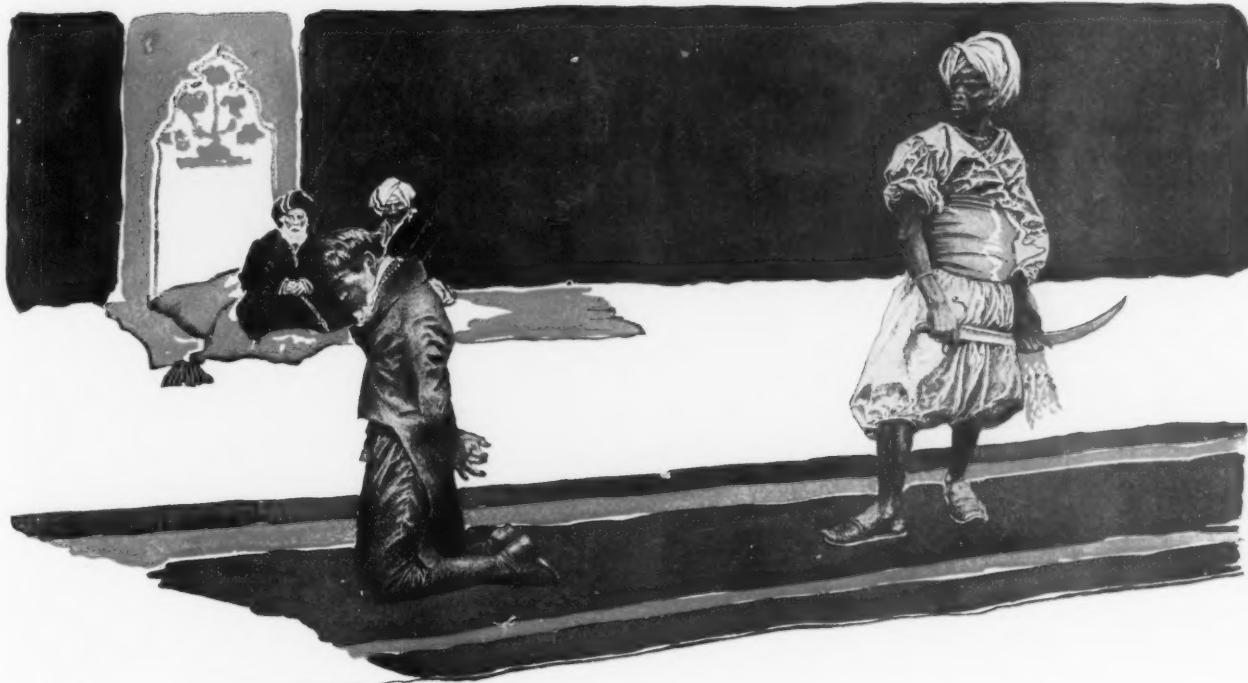
UNITED STATES REGULAR CAVALRYMEN, IN PURSUIT OF RESERVATION INDIANS, ARE OVERTAKEN BY A BLINDING SNOWSTORM IN THE
DRINK A TOAST IN "SNOW-WATER GROG" TO HOME
PAINTED BY F. C. YOUNG



OOLES TOAST"

NG SNOW STORM IN THE FOOTHILLS ON CHRISTMAS EVE. THEY PICKET OUT THEIR HORSES, GATHER ROUND THE CAMP-FIRE AND
ER GROG TO HOME AND THE LOVED ONES FAR AWAY
AINTED BY F. C. YOHN





The PRICE of BLOOD.

An Extravaganza of New-York Life in 1807, written in Five Chapters and Illustrated by Howard Pyle. *¶*

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Introduction.

KN THE year 1807 New York was grown to be a city of no small pretension to an extremely cosmopolitan cast of society. Being a seaport of considerable importance and of great conveniency to foreign immigration, it had even before this become a favorite haven for itinerant voyagers from European countries, who for reasons best known to themselves did not find it to fit their inclinations to remain at home. These people, being received into the society of the most exclusive and particular Fashion of the town, soon lent to the community a tone characteristic of the manners and customs of European centers of civilization.

Could the reader have been introduced into our American city at this period of its history he might easily have flattered himself that he was in London or Paris. Or could he have stood upon Courtlandt Street corner and have beheld young gentlemen of style dressed in the latest English mode, or the young ladies, gay with red hats and red shawls worn a-la-Francaise, passing in review upon their evening promenade, he might have believed himself to have been transported into a community composed of both those European cities. Madam Boucharde, the mantua-maker upon Courtlandt Street, vied in public favor with Mrs. Toole, the Englishwoman whose shop upon Broadway had for so long been the particular emporium of fashionable feminine adornment. Fashionable bucks, who could afford to do so, drank nothing but imperial champagne at Dodge's, and young ladies, who aspired to the highest 'flash of the ton,' made it a point to converse in French from the boxes of the

theatres between the acts of Cooper's performances. Monsieur Dupont taught dancing to young people of quality at twenty-five dollars a quarter, and the French waltz and the English contra-dance divided the favor of the most recherche Assemblies.

So much as this has been told with a certain particularity that the author may better invite the confidence of the discerning reader; for otherwise it might cause him some misgivings to accept with entire assurity the fact that a deposed East India Rajah should secretly have maintained his Court in an otherwise unoccupied house on Broadway, and it might shock his sense of the credible to accept the statement that an Oriental potentate should have been able successfully to pursue his vengeance against the authors of his undoing in so unexpected a situation as the town of New York afforded.

It is with so much a preface as this that the author invites his reader to embark with him upon the following narrative, which, though it may at times appear a little strange and out of the ordinary course of events, may yet lead the thoughtful mind to consider how easy it is for the innocent to become entangled in a fate which in nowise concerns him, and for the discreet to become enveloped in a network of circumstances which he himself has had no part in framing.

Accordingly, while the frivolous may easily read this serious story for the sake of entertainment, the sober and more sedate reader will doubtless carry away with him the moral of the discourse which the author would earnestly point out for his consideration.



CHAPTER I

THE EXTRAORDINARY AND INITIAL CLIENT OF A YOUNG LAWYER WITHOUT PREVIOUS PRACTICE

THERE was at this period in the town of New York a number of young gentlemen possessed of very lively spirits and pretty ingenious tastes for folly. These rat-

ters about the town had gathered themselves together into a society known as the "Blue-Bird Club," in which they pledged themselves not only to eat a supper of oysters and to drink as



considerable a quantity of rum punch as possible, but subsequently to perform all manner of extraordinary acts of folly. This assemblage of rattlers, though it possessed no fixed place of meeting, usually resorted to an oyster house of no good repute, situate upon Front Street, maintained by a negro crimp, by name Bram Gunn, whither it gathered once a month during the period that oysters were in season.

Because of many questions of police jurisprudence that had arisen, it was deemed necessary by the members of the Blue-Bird Club to conceal their individual identities as far as might be possible from the recognition of those who might otherwise know them; accordingly, it was customary for those who attended the assemblies of the Club to assume for the occasion some such masquerade or disguise as the rag-fairs of the junk-shops or the disused wardrobes of the theatres might afford them.

The organizer of this Society and its leading spirit, at the time of which we speak, was a young gentleman by name Nathaniel Griscombe. He was nominally an attorney-at-law, but, though fairly entitled by admission to practice his profession at the bar of justice, he had so far had such small encouragement therein that he had as yet found nothing whatever to do but sit at his office window and amuse himself with his own thoughts and speculations, with such an occasional entertainment as might be offered by the transit across that frame of vision of one or more of those females of lighter tastes and inclinations who by the men of the town were denominated "Does." He was regarded by those who knew him as possessed of a superior wit, and he was noted as a professional fulminator of what is popularly known as "Whim-Whams." It was also reputed that he could consume more spirituous liquors, without a perceptible effect upon his equilibrium, than any man of his age about the town.

Such extravagances as he indulged in entirely hid from the view of his acquaintances and of the town the fact that he was a young gentleman of no uncommon parts. Indeed, had fortune offered him opportunities in proportion to his abilities, instead of neglecting him so entirely, he might have been earning the applause of those in his profession who possessed the respect of the community, instead of evaporating his time with such entirely shallow companions as those young bucks and rattlers with whom he elected to consort. Having, however, a prodigious amount of idle time upon his hands, and being of a disposition that would desire the applause even of the vain and foolish rather than no applause at all, he yielded himself, with only an occasional qualm of conscience, to the indulgence of such follies and escapades as afforded excitement and interest, for the moment, to his extremely volatile spirits and active temperament.

Upon a particular night this young gentleman wended his way to a meeting of the Blue-Bird Club, arm in arm with three fellow-members. Each was clad in a most extravagant and ridiculous masquerade. One was adorned with a long night-gown covered over with yellow moons, a mask with a prodigious nose and spectacles, and a wig of cotton wool. Another wore the black costume of an astrologer, his face blackened and a tall steeple-crowned hat made of black pasteboard upon his head. Our young gentleman of the law had clad himself in the loose cotton blouse and the drawers of a clown. Upon his head he wore an extraordinary cocked hat with a rosette and ribbons of green, yellow and red, and to further conceal his identity he had blackened his face and had painted red circles in vermilion around his eyes and mouth. In these costumes our three wild bucks made their way to the meeting-place of the Blue-Bird Club, shouting, singing, and by their pungent jests exciting alternate emotions of amusement and irritation in all those whom they passed; and, arriving at the meeting-place of their Society, found gathered an unusually large assembly, consisting of four or five and twenty other young gentlemen, all like themselves bent upon the execution of whims and follies, and all alike disguised in extravagant and outrageous costumes.

With many absurd ceremonies, which were supposed to be of a secret nature, and a multitude of performances which rather befitted a cage of monkeys than a gathering of rational human beings, but which so well sufficed to tickle their sense of wit that continued roars and peals of laughter greeted each performance, the initiatory formalities were concluded, and a supper of stewed oysters, cucumber pickles, water-biscuit and rum punch was attacked with a heartiness of appetite which did credit alike to the easy consciences and the hearty stomachs of those who partook thereof. Nor did the mirth of the Club at all diminish with the

progress of the repast; rather did their sense of the ludicrous become more keen and volatile as each new glass of rum punch was consumed. A look, a word, a grimace, was enough to cast the whole assembly into convulsions of laughter, from which some could hardly recover before spasms of cachinnations would seize upon them again.

The extravagance and uproar had become deafening when, at their height, the door of the room in which the assembly sat at their obstreperous repast was suddenly flung open, and a portentously tall and mysterious figure, clad entirely in black, entered the apartment and stood regarding the furious scene of folly in masquerade, if not with amazement at least with a perfectly silent observation. The figure that thus so suddenly appeared was wrapped in a long rich cloak of a dark and heavy material, the face being entirely hidden by a mask hung with long black silk fringe. This apparition stood for a considerable time unobserved by our young rascals, who were too far engrossed in their own follies to take notice of anything else; but presently one, and then another, and then all of the individual members, became aware of his presence. This acknowledgment of the advent of the stranger was indicated by a redoubled outburst of uproar composed of shouts, whistles and catcalls, and, supposing nothing else than that the newcomer was one of their members, they began freely to bestow upon him such part of the evening's entertainment as had not been consumed in a shower of cucumber pickles and water-biscuit that fairly rained upon him like a storm of hail.

Any one less determined upon a purpose than the stranger could hardly have stood his ground. As it was, he made no pretense of defending himself from the attack, but submitted to the assault of the Blue-Bird Club with so much dignity of demeanor that, what with the richness of his attire—so different from their tinsel foppery—and what with the silence of his observation—his eyeballs now closing into darkness and now shining whitely beneath the ebony shadow of his mask—it began to dawn upon the brains even of our half-t tipsy buffoons that here was something of a different purpose from their intemperate madness and frenzy of folly.

By little and little the uproar in the room diminished, until at last all fell fairly silent and sat returning the gaze of the visitor, if not with a growing respect, at least with an increasing curiosity as to the purpose of the presence that had unexpectedly introduced itself upon their absurd and senseless performances. Whereupon, being able now to make himself heard, the stranger in a commanding voice demanded to know which of the company present was the attorney-at-law, Nathaniel Griscombe.

It may be imagined that our young lawyer was somewhat surprised and sobered by this inquiry. Rising from his seat, he replied to the challenge that he was the individual whom the other sought; and then, suspecting that it might be the intention of the stranger to put a hoax upon him, he added that if the visitor was up to any whim-whams or bit of a joke, he, Nathaniel Griscombe, was a rattle himself and knew perfectly well exactly what o'clock it was.

The stranger, without any immediate reply, regarded our young gentleman for a considerable time in silence. But if he experienced any emotion of surprise or amusement at the sight of the besmeared and bepainted face and extraordinary attire that the youthful attorney presented to him, he made no betrayal of his sentiment. "Sir," said he with perfect seriousness, "so far as jesting or desiring to jest, I assure you that I at this moment am more serious than I suppose you have ever been in all of your life. I have been looking for you everywhere and have gone from place to place, misdirected by every one from whom I requested knowledge. I have stood at the door for a considerable time knocking; but finding myself not heard, because of the noise you have been making, and not choosing to wait all night for permission to enter, I came in without being bidden, to find you at last in this company of apes and buffoons. My purpose in coming here, I must inform you, is of so serious a nature that were it governed by other circumstances I would at once withdraw and leave you in peace to the continuation of your folly. But you will, perhaps, be surprised when I assure you that it is with the utmost satisfaction I discover you in such a place as this, and so surrounded and engaged as you are."

At these words, spoken with perfect sobriety and every appearance of candor, our young gentleman presented, it must be confessed, a rather silly face. "Upon my word," he said, with as easy a laugh as he could assume for the occasion, "I am

very well pleased that my present surroundings afford you satisfaction. I can only say, however, that I am glad you are not likely to come to me as a client, for your respect for my parts could hardly be augmented by finding me so engaged."

"As to that," returned the stranger with unrelaxed sobriety, "you will no doubt be additionally surprised to learn that I did indeed come to you as a client to his attorney."

"Then, indeed, sir," cried our young gentleman, who began again sagely to suspect that a hoax was being put upon him, "you have my word of honor that I am at a loss to guess why you are satisfied to find me indulging in such folly and intemperance as that which you discovered when you favored us with this unexpected visit."

"As to that," said the stranger, "I can easily enlighten you. The nature of the business in which I would employ you is of such a sort as to demand the attention of one not only possessed of spirit and courage and an entire command of unoccupied time, but also of one possessed of other and very different qualifications. To this end I have made diligent inquiries, and I have conceived the opinion that you are a man not only possessed of considerable parts, but of an honesty sufficient to carry you through so delicate and dangerous a commission as that with which I have to intrust you."

At these words our young gentleman knew not what face to assume; nor could he yet tell whether to regard the whole affair as a hoax or as the beginning of a more serious adventure. "Upon my word, sir," he cried, "you pique my curiosity. But if I am to believe what you tell me I must be better assured of your truth. I am, as you may well believe, too knowing a bird to be 'caught by chaff.'"

"Indeed," said the other, "you yourself can alone prove the sincerity of my words, nor would it in the least remove the doubts that you entertain of my sincerity should I inform you that the business upon which you will be employed concerns the possible murder of my own self. If, however, you are the man of mettle I suppose you to be, you have only to accompany me in the conveyance that awaits below and you can then and there satisfy yourself as to whether I have spoken with veracity or with disingenuousness."

By this time, as may be believed, the assembly of young bucks had fallen entirely silent, nor could our young attorney compose himself to any frame of mind to digest the credibility of that which he heard. "I protest," he cried at last, "the more you tell me, the more my belief is increased that you have a purpose to put a hoax upon me. Nevertheless, if what you have just said is offered as a challenge you shall find me your man, for I declare that I am not afraid to accompany you or any other man wherever you may choose to conduct."

Thereupon, bidding his companions to await his return, he arose, and, removing his cocked hat with its party-colored ribbons from its peg upon the wall where it hung, he followed his interlocutor down the staircase to the street below.

Here he discovered a very handsome cabriolet with red wheels, into which, at the bidding of his companion, our young gentleman stepped, the other following him and closing the door with a crash. Thereupon the driver instantly whipped up his horses and drove away at an extremely rapid rate of speed.

The curtains of the window had been closed, so that our young lawyer was entirely at a loss as to whether he was being conveyed, excepting that the cabriolet continued rattling over the stony streets, and that it turned several corners at an undiminished rate of speed. Nor did his companion speak a word until the vehicle was drawn up to the sidewalk with a suddenness that nearly precipitated our hero from his seat. Almost instantly the door was opened, and the attorney, following his conductor, stepped out upon the sidewalk at what appeared to be the back gate of a considerable garden that partly inclosed the back buildings of a large and imposing edifice standing at a little distance, its outlines nearly lost in the obscurity of the night beyond.

What with the many turnings of the conveyance that had brought him thither, and what with the fruitless surmises and speculations as to his destination, Griscombe was as entirely at a loss to tell whether he had been fetched or what was the situation of the building he now beheld as he would have been had he been transported into another world. Nor did his companion give him time for surmises or suppositions; for, drawing forth from his breeches pocket a key, he opened the gate and immediately introduced our hero through a wet and wind-swept garden and by the back door into the kitchen of the residence, which was illuminated by the light of a single candle.

With no more illumination than this taper could afford, the stranger thence led the way through the dark but richly furnished spaces of a silent and sleeping house of palatial dimensions, until, at the further extremity of the building, he finally conducted our young lawyer into a large and nobly appointed library. Here a lingering fire of coals still burned in the marble fireplace, diffusing a grateful warmth throughout the apartment, at the same time lending a soft and ruddy illumination by means of which our hero was able with but little difficulty to distinguish the stateliness and profusion of his surroundings. The heavy and luxuriant folds of rich and heavy tapestry sheltered the windows; soft and luxuriant rugs of Oriental pattern lay spread in quantities upon the floor; the walls were hung with paintings glowing with color and of the most exquisite

outlines; beautifully bound books crowded the cases that surrounded the room, and the marble mantel glistened with ormolu and crystal adornments.

Meantime his conductor, having lighted a quantity of wax candles upon the mantel-shelf, and having laid aside the mask that for all this while had concealed his identity, turned, at last, to our hero a face whose lineaments, though extremely handsome, were as pale as wax and furrowed with the lines of a most consuming care. A quantity of hair as black as ebony curled about his alabaster forehead, and he fixed upon his visitor a pair of large and somber eyes, whose piercing brilliancy betrayed an illimitable anxiety of soul. Beautiful, however, as was the countenance presented to the observer, there was in the hardness of its lines, and the thin and compressed nervousness of the lips, a stern relentlessness of expression that the smoldering and sinister fire which glowed in the eyes alone might be needed to enflame into a conflagration of rage and of cruelty.

Having motioned Griscombe to a soft and luxuriant seat upon the other side of the fire, himself leaning with an elegant ease against the mantel-shelf, this strange and singular being composed himself, as though with a considerable effort, and addressed to his listener the following extraordinary discourse without any preface whatever:

"You will doubtless be considerably surprised," he said, "to learn that you behold before you one who feels well assured that he is already condemned to an unknown death that shall visit him perhaps within the course of a day or two, perhaps within the course of a few hours. I know perfectly well that you may be inclined even to doubt the truth of so extraordinary a statement or to question the entire sanity of one who propounds so startling a statement. Nor can I even enter into such an account of my miserable circumstances as shall convince you at once of my truthfulness and of my sanity without involving you also in the danger in which I lie entrapped. Should you be the recipient of my confidence certain death would probably await you, as I believe it awaits me, and you would thus be prevented from carrying out the important commission that I am now about to impose upon you."

It may be rather imagined than described into what a state of amazement, not to say stupefaction, so extraordinary a prologue as this should have cast our hero. He sat, sunk into a perfectly inert silence, gazing at the singular and tragic being before him without possessing, as it were, the power of making a single movement. At another time his absurd and preposterous figure, with its bedaubed and bepainted countenance, might, in its expression of solemn seriousness, have appeared infinitely ludicrous. As it was, the profound tragedy of the scene was only accented by the grotesqueness of his outlandish presentment. Without seeming to observe his silence, but fetching a profound sigh that appeared to come from the very bottom of his heart, the speaker presently resumed his address as follows:

"But though I may not relate to you all the circumstances of my dreadful fate, I may at least tell you this much: That I and another were engaged in a political revolution in Industan, in the course of which a powerful and implacable Oriental ruler was overthrown from power. Knowing to what an extent I had incurred his resentment I thought to escape his vengeance in this remote country. I find, however, he has discovered me, and I have already received a warning that my life is in imminent danger. My brother, who was the companion of my machinations, as he was the partaker of my rewards, is hidden in a remoter part of this country, and it is my intention not only to transmit to him through you a warning of his extreme danger and of my own miserable fate, but also to carry a portion of that treasure which was my reward and which I do not choose to have fall into the hands of my enemies. I may, sir, be unable to convince you of my sincerity by the use of such empty words as those which I am obliged to use, but what your ears may disbelieve your eyes may at least convince you of."

As he concluded he smote his hands together sharply two or three times in succession, whereupon a door near to where he stood was immediately opened as though in echo by a waiting attendant, who, with a silent footfall, entered the apartment. This new personage upon the scene possessed an Oriental cast of countenance which was further enhanced by his extraordinary costume; his head being surmounted by a turban, and his figure clad in a long garment of dark embroidered silk. In one hand he bore a casket about the bigness of a hat-box, bound about with bands of steel of prodigious strength and studded with polished brass nails. In the other he carried a small tray with a leather bag upon it. Without betraying the slightest signs of curiosity or surprise at Griscombe's extraordinary figure, but with a deportment of the utmost seriousness, he placed both of these objects upon the table beside our hero, and then, with a profound obeisance to the gentleman beside the fireplace, withdrew as silently and as suddenly as he had entered.

"In yonder bag," said the gentleman, immediately resuming his colloquy, "are one hundred pieces of gold valued at twenty dollars each. Such part of this as you find necessary you are to expend in executing the commission with which I shall presently intrust you, the residue you are to retain as a fee for your services. This strong box you are immediately to convey to your lodgings in my cabriolet, which waits for you below at the back gate, devoting to its safety the most extraordinary care, for it contains a priceless treasure. If by nine o'clock to-morrow

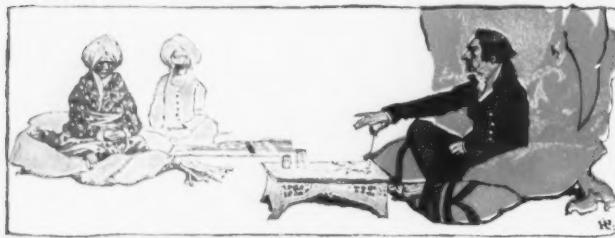
morning you receive no word from me you will know that I am no longer in the world of the living, and that the vengeance that has followed so relentlessly upon my footsteps has at last overtaken me. In that case you are immediately and with all despatch to convey this box to Bordentown in the State of New Jersey, and are to deliver it to the person designated upon the address attached to the handle. He is my brother, and his name, as you will discover, is Mr. Michael Desmond. Upon the opposite side of the Ferry, at Paulus Hook, you will find a post-chaise awaiting its passenger. This I have provided for myself in case I am able to escape the dangers which overhang me. Should I not be so fortunate as to accomplish an escape you are to take my place in the conveyance and to pursue your commission, stopping neither day nor night until it is accomplished. My brother I make the legatee of the greater part of that wealth (the price, if you please, of treachery and of blood) which has proved the source of my own undoing. Behold! you shall see it for yourself!"

As he spoke our young lawyer's extraordinary client stepped briskly to the box, applied a key to the lock and lifted the lid. Within was a considerable mass of closely-packed lamb's wool, which, as Griscombe—consumed by a fever of curiosity—arose to observe, the speaker deftly removed, displaying to the young lawyer's dazzled and bewildered gaze a sight that well-nigh bereft him of what reason he had remaining after his late most incredible interview. Reposing upon a second mass of lamb's wool, hollowed out as though to receive its precious contents, was a double handful of precious stones of inconceivable size and brilliancy, which, in the light of the candles that had been lighted, shed forth a thousand dazzling sparks of infinite variety of flaming colors. It was but a glance; the next moment the lamb's wool was replaced, the lid was clapped down again, the key turned, and Griscombe's bedazzled sight returned once more to the objects about him.

"And now, my dear sir," resumed his interlocutor, "whether or not you believe my story, you will, I am sure, perceive how important is the commission I intrust to your keeping, and how well I am inclined to pay you for all of your trouble. I trust, therefore, you will consider me to be lacking neither in courtesy nor in hospitality if I beg you to withdraw and to return to your own house. So great is my threatened danger that I dare not even accompany you to my cabriolet, that is awaiting you where we left it; but in lieu of myself I shall send with you an attendant who is altogether attached to my interests, and who will serve as a guard until you and your charge are safely ensconced in your lodgings."

Thereupon he once more clapped his hands together. Again the same mysterious attendant, who had before replied to the summons, appeared in instant response, and in obedience to elaborate directions delivered in a foreign tongue, of which the young lawyer understood not a single iota, bowed to our hero and indicated that he was prepared to accompany him upon his return.

With this concludes the first chapter of our narrative, with only this to add: that our hero, under the escort of his singular attendant, arrived safely at home, where he hid his treasure casket under the bed in the remotest corner of the room, until he could otherwise dispose of it.



CHAPTER II

REMARKABLE BEHAVIOR OF THE LAWYER'S SECOND CLIENT

STHE ingenuous reader may readily imagine, what little remained of that night was passed with no great ease or repose by our hero. But little slumber visited his eyelids, and that little so disturbed by vivid and diabolical visions of terror that he had better have remained awake than to have fallen into so portentous a sleep. In a succession of monstrous images he continually beheld his client distorted by the most grotesque and fantastic pangs of dissolution, as continually he was haunted by visions of the journey he was about to undertake, and such phantoms were always accompanied by corresponding dreams of the strong-box of treasure.

In one of these tremendous visions he beheld himself searching in a deep bed of sliding sand for the jewels which had been lost from the overturned casket, while a dreadful form leaned out of the window of the post-chaise upon the bank above, shrieking to him to hasten or it would immediately perish.

It was from this portentous dream that he awoke to find the early winter daylight struggling through the window shades, and to an immediate realization of the strange and inexplicable commission that awaited him.

Nor was it until, in the gray of the morning, he had again viewed the bag of gold and the casket of treasure, could he feel entirely assured that what had befallen him the night before was not an hallucination such as those that had pursued him throughout the troubled sleep from which he had just aroused himself. It appeared to him incredible that such strange occurrences could really have happened to him, and it was above an hour before he could compose his mind to accept that which had occurred.

Finding himself at the end of that time in no small degree exhausted by the several instances of extreme excitement through which he had just passed, and discovering that he was now assailed by a sharp and vehement appetite, he determined to visit an oyster-bay at the neighboring Oswego Market, where, so long as he had been able to obtain the necessary credit, he had been in the habit of taking an occasional meal. To this end, having extracted a piece of gold from the leathern bag, and having carefully hidden the rest in a drawer of his bureau, he sallied forth in quest of that with which to satisfy his appetite, carrying with him for the sake of safe keeping the treasure casket of jewels.

Having satisfied the immediate pangs of his appetite by a breakfast of unusual elaborateness, and having nearly overwhelmed the keeper of the oyster-bay with the proffer of a double eagle of gold from which he was requested to extract payment for the entertainment he had just received, he returned home refreshed in body and in mind, with renewed courage and possessed by a keen and vehement desire to follow out to its end the adventure upon which he now found himself embarked.

Entering that bare and half-furnished apartment which he designated his office, and which opened into his bedroom beyond, he discovered a stranger to be seated in a chair beside the desk as though awaiting his coming. As our hero entered, this stranger arose with a profound salutation and presented to our hero's view a person singularly tall and slender, a face of copper-yellow, straight hair, a hooked beak of a nose, and eyes of piercing blackness. He was clad with the utmost care in clothes of the latest cut of fashion, his linen was of immaculate whiteness, and the plaited frill of his shirt-front exhibited the nicest and most elaborate laundry-work imaginable. In short, his costume was that of the most exquisite dandy; his countenance—the singularity of its appearance enhanced by a pair of gold ear-rings in his ears—was that of a remote foreigner of unknown nationality.

Without giving our lawyer time for further observation, the stranger, in the most excellent and well-chosen English, and with hardly a touch of foreign accent, addressed him as follows:

"You behold," said he, "one who has come to you offering himself as a client, whom, though you may find his business to be of a singular nature, you will also find to be extremely inclined to profit you well in the relations which he seeks to establish with you."

"Sir," replied Griscombe, with no little importance of tone, "you come to me at a time of extreme inconvenience. It is now after half-past seven, and at nine o'clock I may be obliged to undertake a commission of importance beyond anything of which you can, perhaps, conceive. A journey of the utmost tragic importance lies before me, and this box which you behold in my hands belongs to a wealthy and liberal client whose behests must in no wise be denied."

"I am convinced," replied the stranger in accents of the most extreme and deferential courtesy, "that your time must indeed be greatly in demand if you cannot afford to bestow a little of it upon myself. I am in a position to be perfectly well able to indulge every whim that seizes me, and just now it is my whim to become your client and to purchase of you a considerable portion of your valuable time."

At these words it began to occur to Griscombe that the eccentric being before him was, perhaps, better worth his attention than he had at first supposed. Accordingly, excusing himself for a moment upon the plea that he had to dispose of his present charge, he entered his bedroom and deposited the jewel casket where he had before hidden it—under his bed and in the remotest corner of the room. Having thus left it in safety he returned again to the office where his second client was patiently awaiting his return.

So soon as Griscombe had composed himself to listen, the other resumed his discourse as follows: "I am," said he, "as I before told you, perfectly well able to pay for every whim that seizes me. That I may convince you of this I herewith offer you a fee which I feel well assured is equal to any you may have received in your life before. Behold, in this bag are a hundred pieces of gold valued at twenty dollars each, and if that is not sufficient I am fully prepared to increase your fee to any reasonable extent."

At these words Griscombe knew not whether his ears deceived him nor whether he or this new-found client were mad or sane. Nor could he at all credit the truth of what he heard until the stranger, opening the mouth of the bag, poured forth upon the table a great heap of jingling gold money. "You will," resumed his new-found client with perfect composedness

of manner, "be no doubt considerably surprised to learn the nature of the duty which I shall call upon you to perform. It is that you play me a game of jack-straws." Here he allowed for a moment or two of pause, and then continued: "You have doubtless observed that I am a foreigner. By way of explanation of this whim of mine I may inform you that I am an East Indian of considerable importance in my own country. Being extravagantly wealthy and possessing a prodigious amount of unoccupied time, I have passed a great part of it in practicing and playing the game to which I now invite you to participate, and by and by I became so inordinately fond of the pastime that I now find it impossible entirely to cease indulging in it. In this country I find every one either to be too busily engaged to take part in it or too lacking in the patience to pursue it to a consummation. Learning that you are favored with ample leisure to pursue your every whim, I was encouraged to visit you and to invite you to participate with me in my recreation, and since beholding you I am consumed with such an appetite to test your skill that I am entirely willing to pay very handsomely for the privilege of indulging myself. See! I have brought with me the implements of my favorite pastime."

As he concluded, the stranger drew forth from a pocket in his coat a cylindrical box of ebony carved into the most exquisite Oriental design. Unscrewing the lid of this receptacle and tilting downward the box itself he spilled out upon the table a set of ivory jack-straws of so marvelous a sort that Griscombe in his wildest imaginings could never have believed possible. Some of the straws were plain sticks of polished ivory; others were ornamented with heads or figures of wrought gold set with precious stones. Each of them was different from the other—this a gryphon, that a serpent with distended crest, this a yawning tiger with diamond eyes, that an idol's head with a ruby tongue thrust from its gaping jaws.

The stranger either did not observe or did not choose to remark upon the extreme surprise that possessed his attorney. Offering his opponent a golden hook with a pearl handle he invited him to open the game, into which he himself entered with every appearance of the most entire satisfaction and enjoyment.

In spite of his not infrequent indulgences Griscombe was favored with extreme steadiness of nerve, and, though a casual acquaintance would never have accredited him with it, he possessed at once patience and perseverance to an extraordinary degree. But neither patience nor perseverance nor steadiness of nerve was any match for the infinite skill and dexterity with which the stranger played his game. Griscombe was but a child in his hands, and the jack-straw player dallied with him as a cat dallies with a mouse. At the end of each round the stranger politely assured his opponent that he played naturally a very excellent game and that in time and by practice he might eventually hope to become no inconsiderable adept at the sport. But these courteous expressions only declared to Griscombe how inadequate was his play, and at each repetition merely served to incite him to fresh endeavors.

At the end of an hour the stranger declared his appetite for the amusement to be satisfied, and, gathering up his jack-straws and replacing them in the ebony box, he thanked our hero most courteously for the entertainment he had offered him. Thereupon resuming his cloak and hat, which he had laid aside at the beginning of the game, he delivered a bow of the profoundest depth and departed without another word, leaving the pile of gold pieces upon the table behind him as though they were not worth any further attention.

Nor was it he had fairly gone that Griscombe, with a shock that set every nerve tingling, recalled his precious chest and that box of inestimable treasure that had been deposited in his care, and which for all this time had been left unprotected and almost unthought of. At the recollection of this his heart seemed to stand still within him, and his ears began to hum and buzz, and a cold sweat stood out upon every pore of his body. For upon the instant it occurred to him that maybe this polite stranger, with his marvelous jack-straws, was merely a rook seeking to divert his attention while a confederate carried away the treasure-box from the room beyond. With weak and trembling joints, and yet with hurried steps, he ran into the next room, and, falling upon his knees, gazed under the bed. It was with a feeling of relief that wellnigh burst his heart that he discovered the object of his solicitude reposing exactly where he had placed it.

With a heart as light as a feather, and with a rebound of excessive joy and delight at the thought of the additional fee of two thousand dollars he had just earned with such extreme ease and in so extraordinary a manner, he set himself in haste to dress for the journey that lay before him; finding it exceedingly difficult, in the lightness of heart that now possessed him, to direct a proper sobriety of attention to the possibly tragic fate that had maybe befallen his first unfortunate client since he had beheld him the night before.

With this concludes the second stage of our narrative—excepting to add that when nine o'clock came, bringing no signs of his client, Griscombe crossed the ferry to Paulus Hook, where he found the post-chaise awaiting his arrival, exactly as his client had foretold. Entering this vehicle, our young lawyer immediately began that journey which he pursued with all diligence, stopping neither day nor night till he had arrived at his destination.



CHAPTER III

THE HORRIFIC EPISODE IN THE COURSE OF WHICH THE LAWYER OBTAINED A THIRD CLIENT

OUR hero arrived at Bordentown early upon a clear and frosty winter morning with entire safety and success, and with no greater adventures befalling him than usually occur to the traveler in a private conveyance upon so considerable a journey. Nor had he the least difficulty in discovering Mr. Michael Desmond's address, that gentleman dwelling in one of the most palatial of those abodes that lend such an air of aristocratic distinction to the town.

Immediately, as reply to his request to see the master of the house, he was shown into the reception-room, where Mr. Desmond presently appeared, presenting to his astonished sight a person so exactly and minutely resembling his brother that, had Griscombe not known it to be otherwise, he would have believed them to have been the same individual.

The remarkable resemblance, however, did not extend deeper than the lineaments of the features; for, whereas the countenance of the first Mr. Desmond had been overclouded by an expression of the most somber melancholy and the most overwhelming anxiety, the face of this gentleman beamed with courteous hospitality and generous welcome.

He still held in his hand the card which Griscombe had sent in to him by the servant, and as he advanced with a smile of extreme cordiality illuminating his face, he cried: "I cannot, my dear Mr. Griscombe, be too much delighted that you have favored me with so early a call, since it will give me the pleasure of having you to breakfast and of introducing you to my daughter. I see from what you have written me upon your card that you come upon important business from my brother; but before satisfying my curiosity upon that point I shall insist that you first appease the craving of what must be a very hearty appetite after so long a journey."

Nor would he accept any refusal of his invitation, but with polite determination put aside every effort that Griscombe made to explain the pressing and tragic nature of his mission. "Nay," he cried, as Griscombe continued to urge upon him the importance of his affair. "I insist that you say no more at present. I am perfectly well aware with what an extreme degree of exaggeration a young lawyer regards a commission that may very easily wait for breakfast. I am determined that you first satisfy your appetite and then your sense of duty."

And so, protesting and insisting, he led our reluctant hero by the hand, until he at last introduced him into a spacious and sunlit dining-room, rendered additionally cheerful by a large fire of cedar logs that crackled in the marble fireplace. Here a table, spread with snowy napery and sparkling with crystal and silver, was prepared for an ample breakfast, and, as they entered, the slender and graceful figure of a young lady clad entirely in white arose from where she sat at the head of the board behind the tea-urn. In response to her father's introduction, she replied to our young gentleman's profound bow with all the ease and dignity of deportment imaginable.

At that time Miss Arabella Desmond was one of the most perfect beauties in the United States. With a figure of rounded, yet slender contour, she bore herself with an ease and grace of deportment that at once charmed and delighted the beholder. Her features presented the most exquisite delicacy of outline, and the rich abundance of her raven tresses matching in their color the dark and lustrous eyes, whose liquid brilliancy was ineffably enhanced by the ivory delicacy of her complexion. Add, if you please, to those graces of person a wit at once subtle and alert and an address as amiable as it was entertaining, and you shall possess an image—imperfect, to be sure—of that famous beauty whose hermit-like seclusion from the world, and whose mysterious personality, had now for above two years been a matter of wonder and of speculation to the elegant society of Bordentown, that would gladly have received so admirable an addition into its fold.

Griscombe, as may be supposed, had all this while maintained a close hold upon his precious treasure casket. He had placed it beneath his chair as he took his seat at the table, and what with the consciousness thereof and of the interview with his host concerning his brother's probable fate, he discovered himself to be the victim of a singular embarrassment and strangely at a loss for words wherewith to command his wit to the easy and affable beauty. It was in vain that he endeavored to display the aptness of dialogue which he was entirely conscious he possessed; he was aware only of an unwonted constraint, and, accordingly, it was with a singular commixture of relief and regret that, at the invitation from Mr. Desmond, he

at last quitted the table and followed his host toward the study, mentally declaring to himself that, should the opportunity again offer, Miss Desmond should discover him to be not so lacking in brilliancy as she must have supposed from their first interview. Nor was it until he found himself in the study, face to face with the father, the strong-box of treasure upon the table between them, that he was able to fetch himself entirely back to the seriousness and complexity of the business which rested upon him. Beginning at the beginning, however, he presently found that he was recovering entire command of himself; and presently, in clear and lucid phrases, was reciting every circumstance that had befallen him from the time of his absurd and preposterous masquerade at the supper of the Blue-Bird Club to the moment when his present host had met him in the reception-room.

As he progressed in his discourse a dark and somber shadow of extraordinary gloom gathered deeper and deeper upon the hitherto smiling countenance of Mr. Desmond. By little and little the color left his cheek and an expression of the profoundest anxiety overspread his face, causing him to resemble to a still more extraordinary degree his unfortunate brother. As our young lawyer concluded his narrative the other arose and began walking up and down the narrow spaces of the room, betraying every appearance of an infinite perturbation of spirit suppressed by an iron will and an implacable determination.

"My dear Mr. Griscombe," he said at last, stopping in front of the fireplace, "I shall not attempt to conceal from you my apprehensions regarding the fate of my unfortunate brother. I fear that he is no more, and that a tragic fate has overtaken him. That, however, is now past and gone; it is irremediable, and the question that at present lies upon us is that of my own danger. Tell me, do you suppose it likely that the agents who pursued my brother have any knowledge of my being established in this place?"

"That I cannot tell you," said Griscombe, "unless indeed the mysterious jack-straw player who penetrated into my office may have been in search of such information. I confess I cannot account in any other way for his coming to me."

"It may be so," said Mr. Desmond thoughtfully. "At any rate, I shall immediately quit this place where I now live and shall seek for an asylum in some still more retired and undiscoverable locality. Meantime let us examine into the safety of the treasure which you have so faithfully transported hither."

And as he concluded his speech he arose, and crossing the room to a handsome mahogany escritoire, and opening a secret drawer therein, brought thence a small steel key, the fellow to that with which his unfortunate brother had once before opened the casket in Griscombe's presence. This he applied to the lock, gave it a turn, and threw back the lid.

The piercing and terrible shriek which instantly succeeded the action struck through Griscombe's brain like a dagger. The next moment he beheld his host stagger back, clutching at the empty air, and at last fall in a disheveled heap into the arm-chair behind him, where he lay white and shrunken together as though shriveled up to one-half his former size and bulk by a vision that had just blasted his sight.

So unexpected was this conclusion, and so terrifying, that Griscombe sat as though stupefied. At last he arose, hardly conscious of what he was doing, and the next moment found himself gazing down into the interior depths of the open casket like one in a dream.

There before him he beheld a spectacle the most dreadful that ever he had beheld. His sight appeared to him to swim as though through a transparent fluid, his brain expanded with a fantastic volatility, and his soul fluttered, as it were, upon his lips. For there before him lay, entirely surrounded by lamb's wool as white as snow, a still, calm face as transparent as wax—the immobile face of the first Mr. Desmond, now infinitely terrible in its image of eternal sleep. As though in a malign mockery, the now worthless jewels—about which the possessor had once been so infinitely concerned—had been poured out carelessly upon the motionless lineaments. A precious diamond like tears reposed upon the transparent cheek, and a ruby of inestimable value clung to the pallid and sphinx-like lips. Across the forehead was stretched a fillet of linen, and upon it was inscribed, in letters as black as ink, the two ominous words:

YOU NEXT

How long Griscombe stood like one entranced, gazing at the dreadful spectacle before him, he could never tell; but when at last he turned, it was to behold that Mr. Desmond had arisen from his seat, and that he was now clutching to the mantel-shelf as he stood leaning against it, his body heaving and his whole frame convulsed with the vehemence of the passion that racked every joint and bone. "God, man!" he cried at last, in a hoarse and raucous voice, and without turning his face, "shut the box lid!" and Griscombe obeyed with stiff and nerveless fingers that strangely disregarded the commands of his will. At last the unhappy man, having regained some control over the emotions that convulsed him, and heaving a profound sigh as though from the bottom of his soul, turned once more and

exhibited to the young lawyer a countenance from which every vestige of color had departed, and in whose dull and leaden eyes and pinched and shriveled features it was wellnigh impossible to recognize the genteel and complacent host of a few moments before. "You have," said he in hollow tones, "just delivered to me my death-warrant. In how dreadful a form it was served upon me you yourself have beheld. My sins have overtaken me as my poor brother's have overtaken him. They may, perhaps, have been of an unusually heinous character, but how great is my punishment! I call upon you to declare, even if our hands were ensanguined with the blood of a Prince of India, and if the Spouse of an Oriental King were executed at our commands, and even if we were partakers in our reward as in our crime, is not the fate that has overtaken us altogether too enormous for our deserts?"

"As to that," cried Griscombe, "Heaven is your judge and not I. As for me, I begin to perceive a glimmer of light through these mysteries that have been gathering about me during these last few days, and I declare to you that I will have no more concern either in you or in your secrets. How is it possible," he exclaimed, "that I have come to be the partaker in the consequences of that rapine and of that murder in which you were one time so guilty! No, I will have no more to do with you!"

"And would you," cried the other, "desert me in such extremity as this? Then at least have some pity upon my innocent daughter. We live a life in this place without a friend or an intimate—almost, I may say, without an acquaintance. To whom am I to confide her in a time of such mortal danger as this? Am I to take her with me in my flight? And what if my fate overtakes me upon such a journey—what, then, would become of her?"

Upon this plea Griscombe stood for a while with downcast eyes, every shadow of expression banished from his countenance. As with an inner vision he beheld Miss Desmond as he had seen her but a little while before—innocent, beautiful, radiantly unconscious of the doom that was about to fall upon the house—and his heart was wrung at the thought of such hideous misfortunes falling upon her sinless life. "Sir," he said at last, "your appeal has reached me. What is it you would have me to do? For your daughter's sake I will assist you so far as my abilities may extend."

"I would have you," said the miserable man, "convey my daughter, upon your return to New York, in the post-chaise which brought you hither. With her I will send a quantity of jewels similar to those which you brought to me. These I will place in a strong-box, and that again in a portmanteau of such a convenient size that you can easily take it into the post-chaise with you. These jewels comprise a large part of my fortune, and with them my daughter can easily live in affluence and luxury, should she be called upon to be separated from her unhappy father. She, together with this treasure, you are to carry to a M. de Troinville, who has, for a long while, been the agent both of my brother and of myself, and who is under considerable obligation to us. With you I shall send to that gentleman a letter of full instruction, and as soon as you have delivered that and my daughter into his hands your responsibility shall be at an end, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have relieved the anxiety of one who has probably only a day or maybe a few hours to live, and who would otherwise have found his last moments upon earth to have been blighted."

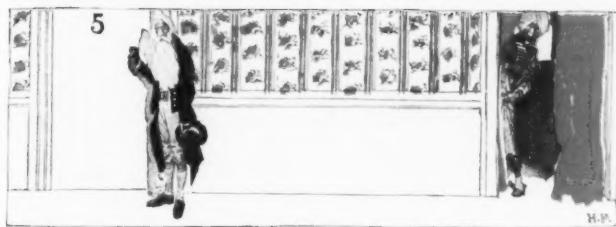
"So be it," said Griscombe, after a moment or two of consideration. "I accept the commission."

"Sir," said Mr. Desmond, "you have won the eternal gratitude of the most miserable man upon the earth;" and as he spoke he made as though he would have embraced our hero.

"Nay," said Griscombe, "I do not choose to accept your caresses. You owe me no gratitude; for, upon my word, I declare that what I do is only for the sake of your daughter, and that, except for her, I would leave you to a fate which in nowise concerns me, and which, from your own confession, you appear in no small degree to have merited. Prepare your letter to M. de Troinville, and in the meantime, by your leave, I will wait in some other apartment of your house than this."

"You are," said Mr. Desmond, "neither polite nor sympathetic. But let it pass. I find myself obliged to accept your services, however unwillingly they may have been offered."

Little remains to be said concerning this part of our narrative, excepting that about ten o'clock Griscombe was summoned to depart upon his return to New York, and that he found the post-chaise waiting in front of the house with the young lady and the portmanteau already ensconced within. As our hero stepped into the conveyance Mr. Desmond gave him the letter of introduction to M. de Troinville, and at the same time thrust upon him a leather bag containing a hundred pieces of gold, valued at twenty dollars each, declaring that he had employed him as his attorney, and that this was his fee. Griscombe would gladly have rejected the stipend could he have done so without betraying to the unconscious young lady the portentous nature of the affair that had overwhelmed them all. As it was, he found himself obliged, however unwillingly, to accept the gratuity thus thrust upon him.



CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH IS RELATED THE REMARKABLE REQUEST OF THE
LAWYER'S FOURTH CLIENT

EVEN if our hero had never again beheld Miss Desmond, he might easily have retained her in his memory for years afterward as a bright and radiant vision of that otherwise gloomy and portentous episode of his life. As it was, what with his having been intrusted with the guardianship of so beautiful a creature, what with his pity for her unconsciousness of the dreadful fate that had overtaken her father, and what with the necessity he was under of disguising from her the terrible events that had occurred and of answering in kind the sallies of the innocent and entertaining gayety that burst from her continually during their journey—what with all these, and the warmth and fragrant charm of her presence so close to him in the narrow confines of the post-chaise, his heart was possessed to its inmost fibers with so consuming an ardor of pity and tenderness that he could gladly have laid down his life for her sake.

It was at two o'clock of an afternoon upon the last stage of their journey that they stopped for a dinner at the tavern in Newark, in New Jersey, almost, so to speak, in sight of their destination. It was excessively cold, and a light snow had begun to fall from the gray and leaden sky, giving promise of an early night. A cheerful fire of hickory wood burned in the fireplace, diffusing a grateful warmth throughout the apartment, and in the pleasure of its heat Miss Desmond yielded herself to an extreme relaxation of spirits. She rallied Griscombe upon the diffidence he had exhibited upon their first introduction. She congratulated him with a mock seriousness upon his approaching release from his duties as a Squire of Dames. Her father had given her to believe that he would follow her immediately to New York, and, reminding Griscombe that the next day would be Christmas, she invited him to come to M. de Troinville's to dine with them. Nor could Griscombe listen to her innocent prattle without experiencing such an overmastering pity for her unconsciousness of the tragic fate that had overtaken her father and for her own hapless condition that it was wellnigh impossible for him to answer her sallies with railing of a like sort. However, he continued to act his part with such skill of performance that his companion never once suspected with what effort he composed the words he uttered.

It was at this juncture, fraught with such pathetic emotions to our hero, that an apologetic knock fell upon the door, and, the next moment, as in answer to his own summons, a little old gentleman of extraordinary appearance entered the room. A long white beard covered his face, which was of a yellow-brown complexion and entirely covered with a multitude of minute wrinkles. His eyes, piercing and black, sparkled like those of a serpent beneath his overhanging eyebrows. He wore a long black cloak trimmed with fur, which, gathered close about him, gave him a remarkably foreign appearance.

"My dear young gentleman and my dear young lady," he began in a thin, high voice, "learning at the bar that you had a good fire in this room, I ventured to intrude myself upon you with perhaps as strange a request as you ever heard in all of your lives."

At the very first appearance of the stranger, who somehow in his singularly Oriental appearance suggested the jack-straw player of a few days before, a strange presentiment of evil began to take possession of Griscombe's mind. Nor were his apprehensions lessened as the old gentleman, resuming his speech, continued as follows: "I am, as you may observe, my dear young gentleman and my dear young lady, extremely old, and I am obliged to confess to the possession of certain follies of which I am now entirely unable to rid myself. Fortunately for myself I am excessively rich, and so am perfectly well able to indulge those whims, however absurd, that have now grown entirely a part of my nature, and which in one so old as myself can never hope to be eradicated. Learning that you, my dear young gentleman, were an attorney-at-law, I determined to approach you as a client and to purchase of you a small portion of your no doubt extremely valuable time." Upon this he drew from beneath his cloak a leatheren purse full of money which he set upon the table. "In this," he continued, "are a hundred pieces of gold valued at twenty dollars each. I offer it to you as a retaining fee, and I venture to say that few lawyers of your age have ever received so much at a time from a single client."

"And what," cried Griscombe, with a voice he could scarcely command, "and what is it you desire of me?"

"I hardly know," said the old man, "how to prefer the

extraordinary request that I have to offer. You must know that I am inordinately fond of the game of tit-tat-toe, and my object is to purchase one half-hour of your valuable time, my dear young gentleman, that I may indulge myself in my favorite pastime."

At these extraordinary words and at the entire seriousness of the speaker, the young lady burst into an irrepressible fit of laughter which she found it altogether impossible to control. But upon Griscombe the effect was entirely different. Those vague and alarming suggestions that had begun to take possession of him leaped at once into positive reality. He had for safety left the portmanteau with its precious contents in the adjoining bedroom, which he had just used as a dressing chamber, and he instantly perceived under the innocent request of the old gentleman with the white beard the most sinister and malignant designs upon it. He sprang to his feet as though stung by the lash of a fury. "You villain!" he cried in a hoarse and straining voice, "I know what are your designs, and but for this young lady and my desire to conceal from her your ominous purposes, I would fling you at once out of the window. Begone, lest I find it impossible to restrain myself!"

These words were uttered with a paroxysm of passion such as the young lady was entirely unable to account for. Never before had she beheld our hero exhibit anything but the utmost delicacy and gentleness of manner, and now, not in the least understanding the reason for his fury, she gazed upon him with astonishment in which terror was almost the entire component part. These emotions, however, gradually gave place to an increasing and generous indignation at what she considered the unmerited violence exhibited by a young man against another old enough to be his grandsire.

"Upon my word, Mr. Griscombe," she cried indignantly, "I profess I am entirely at a loss to understand your anger against this poor old gentleman. What, may I ask, is the reason of your excessive fury at so harmless a request as that which he has proffered?"

"Madam," exclaimed Griscombe vehemently, "I cannot explain it to you!"

"I confess," she cried with still more heat than before, "I cannot understand your violence, unless it is that you fear to appear ridiculous by indulging this poor old gentleman in his innocent whim." And then upon our hero's continued silence, she added, "I could not have believed it possible that you could have exhibited so much impatience and anger at so slight a cause. My opinion of you is altogether altered from what it was, nor can I again recover my original favorable impression unless you offer such reparation as lies in your power by accepting the fee which has been so generously offered you, and by sitting down and gratifying your client with the game of tit-tat-toe he has requested. Should you decline such reparation I can, as I say, never entertain again for you the regard I have until now experienced."

"Indeed," said the old man in a gentle voice, but with a smile in which Griscombe read the most malignant and sinister suggestion, "if the young gentleman apprehends any malevolent designs upon my part, he has only to declare what he suspects and I will go directly away. If, however, he has nothing with which to accuse me, I too shall insist upon it that he, by way of a penance, shall indulge me with my little game."

Poor Griscombe stood overwhelmed with a multitude of emotions. One thing alone was clear to his mind, he must protect his innocent and precious charge from all knowledge of what had now doubtless befallen her unhappy father. It were better that those emissaries of evil that had beset him should fulfill their every purpose—even to the last—rather than that she should suffer. He must be dumb and allow them to conclude their dreadful work. After all, he could easily inform M. de Troinville before the fatal portmanteau should be opened. "I will obey you if you command me, madam," he cried, "but pray—pray, spare me this!" And as he spoke he fixed upon Miss Desmond a look of such agonizing appeal that she could not but have been moved by it had she not been blinded by her own imperiousness of purpose; as it was she only hardened her face into a still more immovable expression of determination. Whereupon, finding her not to be shaken, our hero sank into, rather than sat down upon, the chair beside him.

The old gentleman with the beard, having thus gained his point, beamed with the utmost cheerfulness of expression, and, advancing with alacrity, pushed aside the dinner plates and immediately assumed a position opposite his unwilling opponent, and between him and the door of the room where his precious portmanteau lay hidden. Having thus established himself, the old gentleman drew from a capacious pocket a sandal-wood box inlaid with arabesque figures of gold and mother-of-pearl. Opening this box he displayed to the profound astonishment of at least one of his companions an exquisitely-wrought tablet of mother-of-pearl and gold pierced with one and eighty holes arranged in a square of nine. Opening a slide in the side of the tablet he thence emptied from a receptacle upon the table five curiously-wrought pins of gold and a like number of silver. Handing the five pins of the more precious metal to Griscombe, and reserving for himself the five pegs of silver, the old gentleman immediately explained to his listeners the simple process of the game upon which he proposed to embark. Each player in turn was to thrust a pin into a hole in the tablet, and he who

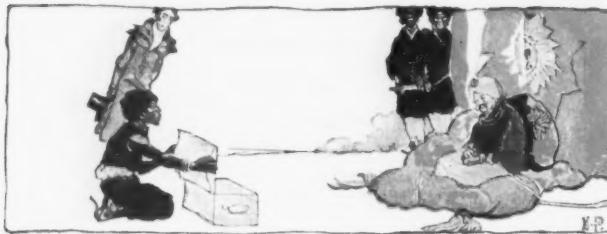
could so far escape his opponent's interference as to arrange three of the five pins in a line should, upon each occurrence thereof, have scored a point in the game. Having completed these easy instructions, he immediately invited Griscombe to open the play, which he upon his part entered upon with every appearance of entire enjoyment and satisfaction.

At any time Griscombe would have been no match for the extraordinary skill of his opponent; but, as it was, he was so torn and distracted by a multitude of emotions that he occasionally knew not what he was doing or what he beheld. His imagination framed the most ominous images of what was going forward in the bedroom beyond, and he lost again, while at times his hands trembled so that he could hardly place the pin in its receptive hole. Now and then, his hearing, strung to an unnatural intensity of key, seemed to detect smothered sounds from the adjoining room, and at such times the ivory tablet appeared to vanish from his sight and the sweat started from every pore.

But in spite of all he suffered, he took care never to permit the young lady to perceive the agony under which he labored. The frequent mistakes of which he was guilty, and the extreme inadequacy with which he played the game, she attributed to mortification or to obstinacy. At last at some most preposterous blunder she could contain her patience no longer. "Why do you not place your pin in that hole, Mr. Griscombe?" she cried. "It will score you a point." And Griscombe, obeying, found the next instant that three of his pins stood in a line.

At that moment a faint whistle sounded from without, and the old gentleman, as though in answer to a signal, declared his desire for the game to be entirely appeased. Withdrawing the pins from the tablet, he replaced them in their receptacle, replaced the tablet itself in the box and shut the lid with a snap. "Madam," he said, "I should have played with you instead of with our young gentleman here, for indeed he exhibits no great aptitude for the game." Then, addressing Griscombe with a double meaning that set every nerve of his victim to quivering: "Nevertheless, young sir," he observed, "you have afforded me a great deal of entertainment, and I protest that you have entirely earned the fee which you have pocketed." Thereupon he incontinently departed, leaving the young lady and our hero to digest, each in his or her own way, the events that had just transpired.

So concludes this part of the narrative, with only this to add, that had Griscombe had no one to think of but himself he would at once have torn open the fatal traveling-case and so have satisfied himself as to the nature of its contents. As it was, for the sake of his charge, who had in so short a time grown so infinitely dear to him, he would rather have had his right hand struck off than have betrayed his terrible apprehensions to her innocent ears. Accordingly, he still wrapped himself in his martyrdom of silence, though he would rather have sat facing a living adder than that ominous portmanteau upon the front seat of the post-chaise.



CHAPTER V

THE CONCLUSION OF THE STORY OF THE YOUNG LAWYER AND HIS FOUR CLIENTS

THE snow, which had begun falling about noon, was, by the time the two travelers reached the ferry to New York, descending in such impenetrable sheets as entirely to conceal the further shore from Paulus Hook. Indeed, it required no little persuasion upon the part of our hero, and the promise of a very heavy bribe, to induce the negro ferryman to transport them across the river upon so forbidding a night. And so slow was their transit, and so doubtful their course, that the night was pretty far advanced before they reached New York.

The town lay perfectly silent, smothered in a blanket of soundless white, upon which the ceaseless clouds of snow fell noiselessly out of the inky sky above. Indeed, the drifts were become so deep that Griscombe entertained very considerable doubts as to how he should convey Miss Desmond and the now tragic contents of the portmanteau to their final destination.

Accordingly, it was with a feeling of the utmost relief that, upon quitting the ferryboat, he was met by a negro who told him that M. de Troinville had been already informed of their coming, and that, because of the storm, a conveyance had been

waiting at the ferry-house ever since early in the evening to transport the young lady and her baggage to that gentleman's house.

A large coach was indeed in waiting, the driver, the horses and the vehicle alike covered thickly with a coating of white. In this conveyance our hero, with the utmost solicitude, disposed the young lady, and, at the same time, ordered that the portmanteau should be deposited upon the front seat. Having thereupon distributed a liberal gratuity upon those who had assisted him, he himself immediately entered and closed the door, and instantly the driver cracked his whip and the coach whirled away with scarcely a sound upon the muffled and velvet-like covering of the street, directing its course through the continually falling clouds of whiteness.

Nor could Griscombe so far penetrate the obscurity of the thickly falling snow as to tell at all whither they were being conveyed. Several corners were turned and a number of streets were traversed, the lamps whereof were entirely unable to pierce the falling clouds of snow so as to declare the locality toward which the coach was being driven.

At length, however, after a rather protracted journeying, and to our hero's considerable relief, the carriage stopped at the sidewalk before a large and imposing edifice, altogether unlighted and as black as night. No building was immediately adjoining, and the mansion stood altogether alone, looking down upon the street in lonely and solitary state.

Almost instantly upon the arrival of the coach a number of servants appeared upon the sidewalk, as though they had been waiting in expectation of the coming of the travelers. Some of these opened the door of the conveyance and assisted the young lady and our hero to alight; others took charge of the portmanteau, which they proceeded immediately to carry into the house; others again stood about as though waiting in attendance upon the new arrivals.

All these attentions were preferred with a singular assiduity, and in such entire silence that Griscombe knew not whether most to admire at the imposing extent of M. de Troinville's household or at the extraordinary training of his attendants. Turning to one who appeared to be the upper servant of the others, our hero commanded that the portmanteau be conveyed to some place of safety unopened and carefully guarded, and that he himself be immediately conducted to M. de Troinville for a private interview concerning business of the utmost importance. In reply, the man to whom he spoke delivered an order in a foreign tongue, which Griscombe was entirely unable to understand, whereupon two attendants, as in obedience to his command, conducted him and the young lady up the steps and into a wide and imposing hallway, the front door whereof was instantly shut upon them.

It was but little wonder that Griscombe and Miss Desmond should have stood gazing about them, altogether at a loss to understand into what manner of a place they had arrived. For, however much they might have been surprised at any eccentricity of a French gentleman living entirely alone, what they beheld was the very last thing they might have expected.

The faint yellow light of a single lamp, suspended from the lofty ceiling by a chain, diffused a dim and obscure illumination throughout the space, and by its yellow glow Griscombe discovered, with no little surprise, that the hall was altogether unfurnished. Not a fragment of carpet lay upon the floor, not a chair, not a stick of furniture relieved the bleak and barren space of wainscot about them, but all was a perfectly empty and barren desolation.

And, what was still more remarkable, the numerous attendants that had just before surrounded them and had introduced them into the house had disappeared as if by magic, and a dead and solemn silence reigned throughout the entire edifice, broken only by a single remote and distant voice that, in a monotonous sing-song, inexpressive intonation, continued for a time a level discourse, which at last ceased abruptly into an entire silence.

There was something so ominous and threatening in all the unexpectedness of these things that Griscombe felt his spirits becoming overshadowed by an overwhelming sense of impending evil. It was only when he discovered that Miss Desmond was becoming perturbed by a similar emotion of dismay, and that she was clinging to him with an exceeding tenacity, that by an effort of will he overmastered his accumulating fears, and, in spite of the cloud of apprehension that threatened to overshadow him, regained command of his courage once more.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Miss Desmond in a hurried and terrified whisper. "What strange place is this to which we have been brought?"

"Have courage," replied our hero steadily, but in the same subdued tone. "You are in no danger. We have probably come to the wrong house, that is all. Wait but a little while and all will be explained." But though our hero spoke with so much courage, his heart was exceedingly burdened with a sense of impending calamity, for he seemed to feel the network of circumstances that had been gathering about him for these few days past enwrapping both he and his ward in ever tightening meshes.

At that instant the figure of a man appeared emerging suddenly from out the gloom. He was tall and thin, and was clad in a long flowing robe of Oriental design. Desiring Griscombe and the young lady to follow him, and without waiting for any



“This only is the witchcraft
I have us’d”

question or refusal, he turned and immediately led the way up a broad uncarpeted stairway to the floor above.

Here a narrow thread of light outlined a door opening upon the landing, as though emitted from a considerable illumination within. This door, as they approached it, was suddenly flung open, and the next moment our hero found himself with his companion in an apartment flooded with such a dazzling brilliancy that, coming as he had from the obscurity without, he was for a time entirely blinded by the unusual radiance.

But by little and little, however, his sight gradually returned to him, and he discovered that he and the young lady were in a room of extraordinary dimensions, suffused with an oppressive warmth, heavy with perfume, and flaming with a thousand radiant and variegated colors. Surrounding him and his companion on all sides were a multitude of attendants of a foreign aspect, all clad in extraordinarily rich and sumptuous costumes of an Oriental pattern.

Immediately upon his appearance, with the young lady hanging upon his arm, this crowd of attendants parted, forming, as it were, a vista through which our hero and his companion could behold the further extremity of the saloon.

It was thus that Griscombe first beheld him whom his instinct instantly told him was the spider who had woven all this web of mystery in which he had become so singularly entangled.

What he beheld was a little yellow man with a flat, fat face and black brilliant eyes. He had composed himself cross-legged upon a divan of crimson silk surrounded by luxurious cushions of embroidered patterns, and sheltered by crimson silk curtains resplendent with gold, which hung suspended from the walls behind him. His figure was almost entirely enveloped by a purple velvet robe, thickly studded with jewels and ornamented in arabesque designs with seed pearls and gold. Upon his nether parts were a pair of crimson velvet trousers, and upon his head was a large and voluminous turban enriched with a single diamond of excessive size and brilliancy, which glowed in the center of the folds of the headress like a star of inconceivable size and brightness. In his hand, brilliant with a multitude of rings, he held the mouthpiece of the long and snake-like water-pipe the smoke from which he inhaled with every appearance of entire enjoyment and satisfaction, emitting it now and then in a thin cloud which immediately dissolved in the heavy and perfumed air. His face was devoid of all expression, and he regarded Griscombe and the young lady with an impassivity of countenance that was in some inexplicable way infinitely ominous.

Upon one side of this figure stood he with whom Griscombe had once played jack-straws, and upon the other side the old gentleman with the white beard whom he had indulged in the game of tit-tat-toe. Both men were now clad in an Oriental garb far more appropriate to their appearance than the garments of civilization in which our hero had first beheld them. Near at hand, as though standing upon guard, were half a dozen or more negroes clad entirely in black and each armed with a naked scimitar, the blades whereof shone now and then like lightning in the dazzling light of the thousand waxen tapers that illuminated the expanse of the apartment.

A long carpet of excessive richness extended the length of the apartment, and upon the floor, in front of the central figure of all this remarkable and terrifying apparition of Oriental splendor, reposed the fatal portmanteau that Griscombe had conveyed with such extraordinary pains from Bordentown.

At sight of this object it seemed to our hero that all that which before had appeared so inexplicable became instantly entirely clear, and it was as though his very vitals dissolved with the fear of that which might in a moment befall the innocent ward confided to his care.

All this while he had been half supporting her, with his arm thrown protectingly around her, while she, upon her part, clung to him with all the tenacity of a growing and overwhelming terror. It was at this juncture that of a sudden he felt her form relax and her clasp upon him to weaken. As he gazed down into her face he became instantly aware, by the excessive pallor of her countenance, her upturned eyes and her closing eyelids, that, whether because of the excessive heat of the room, or whether because of the overpowering perfume, or whether because of the growing terror which had entirely penetrated her heart, or whether because of all these causes combined, she had fallen into a swoon that more nearly resembled death than unconsciousness.

Looking about him he perceived near at hand a sofa of rich brocade covered with a multitude of soft and luxurious pillows. Upon this he laid the inanimate form so dear to him, and then, rendered bold by the desperateness of her situation, turned and walked directly up the length of the room to where that ominous figure sat amid its cushions.

"Sir," he cried, "I more than suspect who you are and what are the sinister purposes you have accomplished. I may even, indeed, guess somewhat of your present designs. I demand, however, to know for certain what now are your intentions toward this young lady and myself. Do not forget that we are in the town of New York, and that a single call from a window may bring me help at any moment."

To this address the being to whom it was delivered made no

other reply than to issue by a gesture, and without moving the mouthpiece of the pipe from his lips, a brief command to a gigantic black who stood near at hand. As in reply the negro advanced to the portmanteau, and with a single movement opened it and displayed the contents to his master.

Griscombe had already taught himself what to expect concerning the melancholy contents thereof, but now that he looked down upon it in reality he again experienced that singular and volatile expansion of his brain, and again his every nerve tingled with the shock which it received.

This time not one but two waxen faces—so exactly alike that they might have been cast in the same mold—reposed side by side, smiling in sphinx-like silence upon their bed of snowy lamb's wool.

And as before the jewels for which the brothers had once been so anxiously concerned were scattered as in mockery in a shower of sparkling and variegated brilliancy upon the immobile lineaments within.

"It is accomplished," said a calm and dispassioned voice, "and it is well."

Then, directing his words to Griscombe, the speaker continued: "You have been the instrument of fate and you have performed your part with admirable exactitude. Ask what return you desire and it is yours."

At these words a sudden inspiration, as it were, seized upon Griscombe. "Who you are and what you are," he cried, "I do not know. Nor do I ask aught of you but one thing; it is that I be allowed to convey the young lady yonder in safety from this terrible place!"

A moment or two of silence followed this and then the same dispassionate voice resumed its speech. "I had intended," said the speaker calmly, "a different fate for her. But be it as you will—she is yours. One thing only I demand of you. It is that you deliver to me the letter of instruction that her father wrote to M. de Troinville. Give me that and take the girl. The coach that brought you hither still waits below. It will transport you whithersoever you may order. You have entirely served my ends, and now you are free to go."

Upon the instant a remote clock struck the hour of twelve, and as in echo the chimes of Trinity Church began ringing at no great distance, heralding for Griscombe the most extraordinary Christmas day that was, perhaps, ever experienced by any person in the United States before or since.

So concludes this part of our narrative, with this to add: that Griscombe conveyed that precious charge, whom he had rescued from a dreadful and mysterious fate, to the City Hotel, where, declaring that she was a traveler who had been taken with a sudden seizure of illness, he confided her to the care of the worthy hostess of that excellent and well-known hostelry.

Furthermore it may be added, that the next day he, with some difficulty, discovered the residence of M. de Troinville, to whom he recounted such portions of his adventures as he deemed necessary, and whom he requested to take charge of Miss Desmond. As, however, he had neither credentials to show nor any proof to offer of the truth of his statements—as, moreover, the treasure with which he had been charged had entirely disappeared—M. de Troinville either disbelieved or pretended to disbelieve the whole story. He declared that Griscombe was either a dupe or himself an impostor, and he ended by bidding him to leave the house, which command our hero obeyed, consumed with an overwhelming indignation.

CONCLUSION

THE casual and flippant reader will no doubt be entirely inclined to ridicule the possibility of events, like these herein narrated, occurring in such unexpected localities as New York, Bordentown or Newark; and, if he reads the story at all, he will do so merely for the sake of amusement and of entertainment, and not for the purpose of seriously digesting its morals.

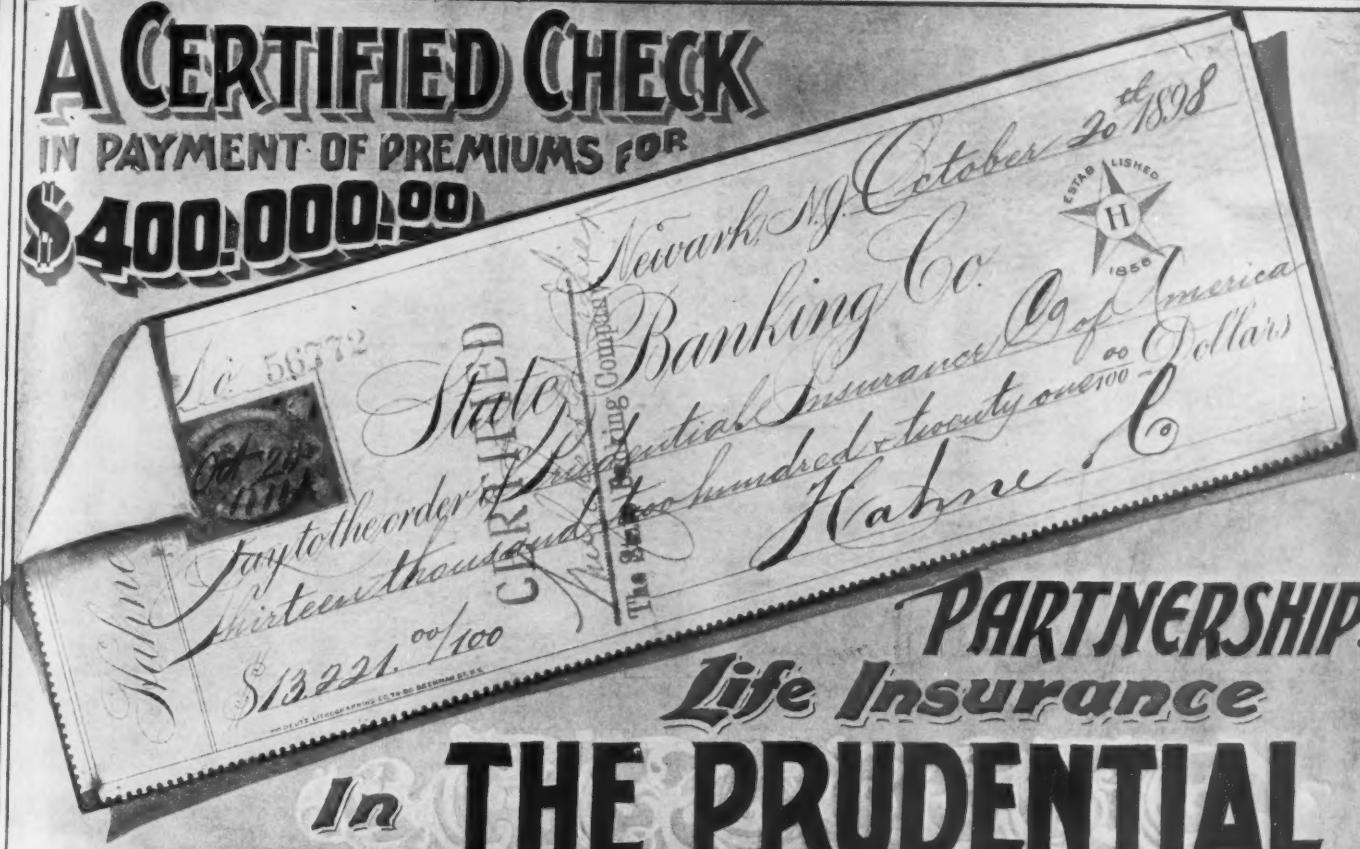
The more serious, however, will weigh well what he has read, and will not be inclined to disbelieve that which has been so soberly narrated, even though it cause him some surprise that such things should have occurred in the midst of sedate American towns.

For the benefit of the former and lighter class of readers, it may be added to the above account that Griscombe undertook the guardianship of Miss Desmond without the least reluctance in the world; that by little and by little he gradually unfolded to her such parts of her own unhappy situation as he deemed it necessary for her to be made acquainted with, and that after a sufficient time had elapsed he proposed to her that she should give him the entire right to become her protector.

Having in such a little while earned eight thousand dollars in fees from four clients, our hero embarked upon his married life with all possible satisfaction and happiness, and when, in 1850, he discovered himself to be at the head of the New York Bar, no one would have supposed that so sedate and moderate a gentleman could ever have passed through a series of such remarkable occurrences as those herein related.

THE END.

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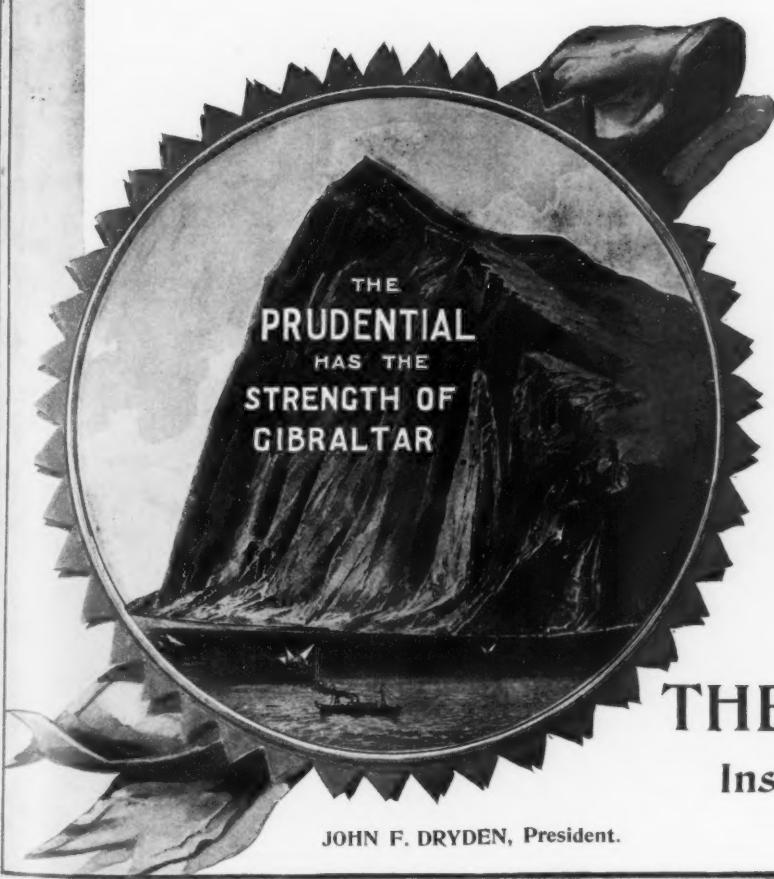
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A College Christmas

FOR THOSE WHO COULD NOT REACH
THE CHRISTMAS TREES AT HOME

"And the tunes that mean so much to you alone—
Common tunes that make you choke and blow your nose."

WHEN Kipling wrote those lines about the banjo and how it "draws the world together link by link," he must have had some fancy of how the college man as well would read it and feel it "with the feasting and the folly and the fun." How many a one of us drifts back again under its "Tinka tinka-tinka-tink" to that jolly old college room and college crowd!

"Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
"Twas Christmas told the merriest tale."

There's a fancy breed among some that our sports are serious. Serious? No, indeed! Now that the wind whistles and the snow flies, the banjo plays, and the big open fire crackles, the seriousness and the deadly earnestness grow more and more misty, while the Harvard man looks through the ring of smoke he blows at his Yale rival and renews over a mug of ale the friendship of Andover, Exeter, Groton or St. Paul. The entrance of a Princetonian really has not caused the Pennsylvanian to leave the room, and the Cornell man in the corner can say shell or stroke without Yale, Harvard and Pennsylvanian falling out with him.

"Let a fellow sing of the little things he cares about,
If a fellow fights for the little things he cares about."

WHAT'S IN THE STOCKING?

"The stockings were hung by the chimney with care
In the hope that St. Nicholas soon would be there."

We all hang up our stockings still. Why not? It may be old Santa Claus has not forgotten us. Here comes Johnny Harvard down to look at his. It is plump and full up to the very top. But he is an ungrateful boy. He throws aside some of the prettiest toys. "Ah, I'm tired of all that!" as one after another he tosses them aside. He has almost reached the foot of the stocking, and a frown is on his face as he looks on the floor and sees a baseball but without the Yale series on it, a tiny ear but no victory inscribed thereon, a running shoe, and that pleases him a little better as he finds a dual league ticket attached, and finally he takes out a small gold football! How his face changes! This is what he has wanted for years, and it has on it eleven to nothing, and seventeen to nothing. Not so bad after all, is it, Johnny? How about a Merry Christmas now?

Then comes sturdy little Eli Yale. He does not believe very much in Santa Claus any more than Johnny does, and he generally makes up his mind to

(Continued on page 32)



Drawn by W. H. Hyde

A COLLEGE CHRISTMAS

COLONEL ROOSEVELT ON THE WAR



COL. THEODORE ROOSEVELT
From a copyrighted photograph by Rockwood

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A COLLEGE CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 30

tell his family what he wants and then be told all the necessary and unpleasant things he must do in order to deserve presents. The first thing he takes out of his stocking is a baseball with the Princeton series on it, then one with the Harvard series, and he begins to look happy. He wanted a running shoe like Harvard's, but between Johnny and William Penn there was none left for him. Then he, too, finds an oar, and it is a mere one than Johnny Harvard's, but there's Ezra Cornell with a far better one—which, by the way, William Penn comes along and breaks. So Eli goes on looking for that football which he almost always gets. He comes to the foot of the stocking, searches even to the toe, shakes the stocking, but no football. Then Johnny begins to grin, and so does even Princeton's little tiger cat over in the corner.

While these two have gone through their stockings Princeton has found a fair running shoe—one of the first he has ever had and hence a pleasant surprise. He does not find what he wanted in baseballs, but that football with the blue stripes on it appeases him much. Ezra Cornell becomes so mad at William Penn's breaking that oar of his that he really does not remember to say "Thank you!" for the gift, and that Orange and Black football he wanted, as well as the Red and Blue one, Santa Claus must have forgotten.

William Penn, too, although he had the satisfaction of breaking that oar of Ezra's, is none too well satisfied with himself, for that crimson football which for some years he has been finding with regularity old Santa Claus has left behind this time. But there is the finest running shoe of all, and attached to it a long string of records. So between that and making faces at Ezra weeping over his broken oar Willie is not very grumpy.

SKELETONS AT THE FEAST

Most of us are only grown-up boys after all, and if it were not for the skeletons in the private closets we should have a pretty jolly old Christmas.

"We all have secrets; you have one
Which mayn't be quite your charming
spouse's;
We all lock up a skeleton
In some grim chamber of our houses.

"Your neighbor Gay, that jovial wight,
As Dives rich, and brave as Hector,
Poor Gay steals twenty times a night,
On shaking knees, to see his Specter."

Do you hear that rattle of bones as Yale quickly snaps the spring lock on a closet that contains—well, let's guess that it is that confounded Cornell Rowing Specter. And Harvard, too, assumes a forced smile as her closet door is pushed together upon the entrance of the intrusive visitor. What do you suppose is behind that door? Ah, that's another lovely articulated skeleton called the Rowing Problem. And Princeton's is Red and Blue, and Pennsylvania's is Orange and Black, while Cornell—over-sensitive Cornell—cannot quite keep the door shut upon hers. She calls it Recognition. Brown's is West Point, and West Point's is that Football Record at Annapolis. Dartmouth's is That Western Trip, and Williams' is That Amherst Victory. Nebraska knows that hers is A Double Pass and a Criss-Cross with an Iowa Wreath, and Chicago can hardly keep the door shut that conceals Widman ready to Break Through. Stanford has found one at last, and it is a big one, and its bones rattle ominously. There is a leek in its eyeless sockets, and as it lifts its skinny finger and points out one sees that it bears a ribbon of Blue and Gold.

SNAPPING MOTTOES

But perhaps some day we shall all be rid of our skeletons. At any rate, let's lock them all up for Christmas.

"Why poke and why pry?
Let the veil hang before us.
If to-morrow we die,
To know it would bore us.
Here's to gold—and a kiss,
In a beaker o'erflowing,
And the chief earthly bliss
Is the joy of not knowing!"

Are there not always at a Christmas Festival some of those outrageous cracking affairs that contain mottoes? Jaffray, the big fellow, gets the long end of two. The first reads:

"He stands as firm as a tree-stem
In heat and tempest and frost,
His toes in the ground are planted,
His arms are heavenward toss'd."

And in that planting of the toes we recognize the work of his teacher Lewis. The other is a short French one, but it is: "Haut et bon."

Daly gets a most appropriate one—"Semper para tuis."

And Haughton, "Ex pede, Herculem." Yes, my boy, there are several back fields who are now able to recognize you from that foot!

Donald gets one quite pat for the Pennsylvania game—"Qui premier arrive au moulin, premier doit moudre."

And, Hollowell, Cochrane, and Farley divide one marked for the Harvard ends. It's legal, and reads: "Qui prior est tempore, potior est jure," which might be freely translated as "The first man down gets the ball."

Mr. Forbes draws: "Victor volentes per populos dat jura" (which likewise is freely rendered, "The coach can have the college"), and smiles a contented smile with just a little cynicism in the corners of his mouth as he thinks of last year.

Beal gets:

"No living man can send me to the shades
Before my time."

Harvard's doctor draws:

"Sweet are the little
Brooks that run
O'er pebbles."

The Yale ends sent this one to the Harvard captain as an indication of their feeling:

"We may outrun,
By violent swiftness, that which we run at,
And lose by overrunning."

Burden found this:

"Though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous."

Reid was rather mystified at drawing:

"But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run."

While Warren concluded there must be something twisted when he found this:

"Let all the ends thou aims't at, be thy country's."

"Why the dickens should a fellow aim at his own ends?" he said.

But Forbes, coming by at the moment, said, with that quiet smile of his: "That's something we'll take care of; you run where you are sent."

(Continued on page 37)

A Valuable Suggestion

For Xmas

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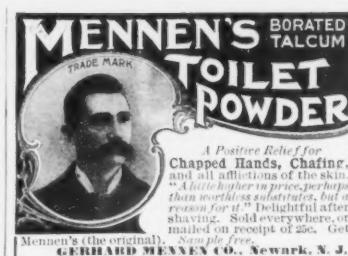
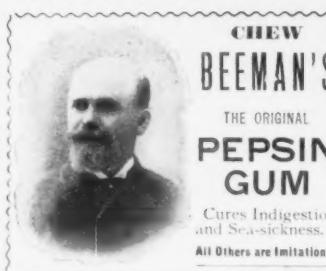
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Under the Mistletoe Bough



ONCE upon a time, when the years went slower, from the waters of the Baltic and the auroras of the Norseland gods and goddesses emerged. Through processions of centuries of which chronology has no record they passed from the uplands of dream into the magnificence of myth. To-day they are still encounterable, but only in ancient runes, in the pages of the calendar, in the harmonies of a few of Wagner's works. Such is the true meaning of the *Gotterdammerung*—the Twilight of the Gods.

Among the divinities of long ago was Odin. He was god of war. The fourth day of the week was consecrated to him. It still is. In old Norse it was called *Odinsdagr*. In Anglo-Saxon, *Wodensdag*. In English, Wednesday. Another divinity was Freyja. She was goddess of love. The sixth day of the week was consecrated to her. It still is. In old Norse it was called *Freydagi*. In Anglo-Saxon, *Frigedag*. In English, Friday. At the great temple of Upsal both were worshiped. In their honor two festivals were held. The first was named *Ostara*. The second *Jul*. From *Ostara* comes Easter. From *Jul* comes Yule—the early term for Christmas.

In the youth of the world the youth of the year was dedicated to it. The festival was a Feast of Joy, a salute to the Sun, a welcome to Nature born in winter's arms. Thoroughly pagan, it was not for that less fair. It survived the ages. From the Norseland it passed to the South. When the barbarians gazed with blue, victorious eyes at Rome, already it was there. It was there that Christianity found it. It was called the *Saturnalia*.

To the sanctity of special seasons the early Church gave no heed. "Unto the Christian," says St. Chrysostom, "the whole of time is a festival because of the excellence of the things bestowed." But in this, as in other things, the custom appealed. Joy at the birth of Nature was substituted for joy at the birth of Our Lord. To the old rite the Church gave a new beauty and a

new significance. In beauty and significance it has been expanding ever since.

Ecclesiastically and briefly, such is the history of Christmas. Interconnected with it are two customs—the giving of gifts and the giving of kisses. Students and thinkers of men derive them both from the Druids. Of the latter we know so little that it is idle to attempt to know less. The only quotable person who enjoyed so much as a bowing acquaintance with them was Caesar. In the story which he has left the mistletoe figures. In the story of every Christmas it ought to figure still.

But just here a loop is needed. The giving of gifts and the giving of kisses are customs old as the hills. Ceremonially considered, the origin of each is religious. Gifts were given to placate and kisses by way of salvation. The one and the other were essential in the worship of the gods that have gone. Both signified adoration, and it is at once pretty and reconducible to note that in Latin, the only language that was made for religion and for love, adoration means kissing—*ad os portare*.

In the Book of Job it is recited that those who worshipped the sun and the moon raised their hands and then touched them with the lips. In the Book of Kings the kissing of idols is noted—a practice, parenthetically, which is noted in Cicero too. When, later on, in Byzance, the big dolls of paganism were replaced by statues of the saints, the practice continued. To this, a sect, austere and orthodox, nicknamed the Iconoclasts, objected. With the Emperor Leo for chief, they went about knocking angels on the head. Presently the Empress Irene appeared and gave them tit for tat. Every one of them whom she could catch she massacred. It is just possible that this terrible lady perceived that the destruction of statues was the destruction of art. Be that as it may, the Beautiful was scared to death and thereafter remained in hiding until handed out again by the enticements of the Renaissance.

Kissing, meanwhile, did not go by favor. The condition of women was entirely subservient. It was not until the Crusades, failing in Islam, had made men conquerors of themselves that in place of the barbarian came the paladin and where the slave had been emerged the queen. Therewith, through subtle gradations, worship became a tender dialogue and manners gentle and refined. In according to woman that which she had never possessed—individuality—the Church dowered her with a conscience. In giving her duties, it gave her rights; it gave her, too, a charm which civilization had never known and to the world a new conception of beauty.

Under the mistletoe bough that conception, accentuated

for drawing-room purposes, has occasionally been perfectly realized and very gently parodied as well. There an ingenue, pretty as a peach and sometimes quite as witty, inviolate as a vestal yet much better dressed, a girl rendered by precept, example and long educational processes as afraid of a kiss as of a bee, may, unrebuked, unashamed and applauded, surrender the silk of her lips. That which otherwise would precipitate a scandal, the legendary and perhaps antispective virtue of the mistletoe transforms into a parlor game. The Druids were great old chaps.

The custom, however, like others, less savory indeed, yet quite as significant, has, within the memory of the present generation, become obsolescent and promises ultimately to become obsolete. More is the pity, too. It is nicer, no doubt, to kiss unobserved. But when the party of the second part objects—as all decorous young parties of the second part ought to—was on Christmas and on Christmas Eve a good deal of satisfaction in being lawfully authorized to lure her beneath a chandelier and embrace her there *nolens volens*. It gave a flavor to the plum pudding and has been regarded as an incentive to wedlock.

Every custom has its day. Precisely as the Yule has been forgot and the Saturnalia ceased, so this rite is disappearing. But the giving of gifts remains, and will remain so long as there are children big and little. For that is not a mere custom. Originally, like kissing, a religious observance, latterly it has developed into a tax. There is modern progress.

Christmas, too, has altered. In Catholic communities the ceremonies connected with it are beautiful in their poetry and elevation still. In utilitarian centers the spirit that *stets verneint* has converted it into a legal holiday. Centuries ago, at the approach of the Saturnalia the rich of Rome went forth to their manors in the country and their villas on the sea. To-day, at the same season, the rich of New York do likewise.

That is not progress. Christmas should represent more than a *detasselement* and a change of air. Of all feasts it is the most inspiring. In significance it is emblematic, in suggestiveness unexcelled. Whoso studies its meaning learns the inutility of blame and approval, of hope and fear; learns, too, that there is about us something higher than our will, that we are ruled not rulers, and that yet, when conjecture has ceased and the insoluble no longer perplexes, when wonderment is dispersed and the end is come, that then, afar and beyond, somewhere to pleasure us, there may be landscapes the color of emerald where gifts are free, where kisses are eternal, where the mistletoe is perennial and where dreams come true.

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A COLLEGE CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 32

Burnett and Eaton get: "Sic itur ad astra," which they read: "We are understudies for the stars."

Although the especial heroes of the gridiron have had the first chance at the candy and verses there are still some of the lollipops left over, and the accompanying lines may fall in some lucky places.

Little Poe draws: "Exegi monumentum aere perennius." Hillebrand finds: "Insperata accidentia magis sueta quam severe spares," which, once more for the sake of those who may have studied mathematics instead of Latin, may be freely rendered: "Though we didn't win just the way we expected we won just the same."

Unlucky Yale gets:

"Perire mores, jus, decus, pietas, fides,
Et qui dedire nescit, cum perit, pudor."

and this a kind professor in Latin at the university tells me means: "We lost everything save the clothes we played in, and were ashamed of those." The Yale coaches take theirs in French: "Après la mort, le médecin." Dashiell gets a line reading: "Melior est postu vere præveniens quam severe puniens," or, "Better to keep them 'on side' than give them the penalty." Some one has slipped among the lot one addressed to "All Football Managers, Andrus of Princeton alone excepted," and it reads: "Là où Dieu veut, il plait"; translated, "There was a conspiracy by the Weather Bureau." Hare most appropriately finds: "Nil actu reputans, si quid supererset agendum," which is rendered, "I suppose I must block as a guard, and turning quickly run back and make the kick and then beat the ends down the field." Chamberlin gets:

"O dñi immortales!
Ubina gentium sumus!"

and Warner:

"Et res non semper,
Sperni semper adest!"

while Woodruff reads: "Heu, quam difficile gloria custodia est"; translated, "How can a man win always?" and also: "Nulla fata loco possit excludere"; rendered, "Luck had a complimentary ticket." Herschberger gets: "A glittering star," and the left half-lacks of Iowa and Nebraska: "Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere." Widman of Michigan receives one from Chicago, reading:

"Time ne'er forgot
His journey, though his steps we numbered not."

WALTER CAMP.

NOTE

THE Department of Amateur Sport announces a series of important articles to appear in 1899, by experts on American athletics, among them the following:

Problems of English and American Rowing, by Professor Benjamin Ide Wheeler of Cornell University. *Polo—English and American—and its Relation to Cavalry Camps*, by H. L. Herbert, Chairman of the Polo Association. *Cricket in America*, by George S. Patterson of Philadelphia. *Eligibility in College Athletics*, by Professor Wilfred H. Munro of Brown University. *Football in Canada*, by Edward Bayly of Toronto.

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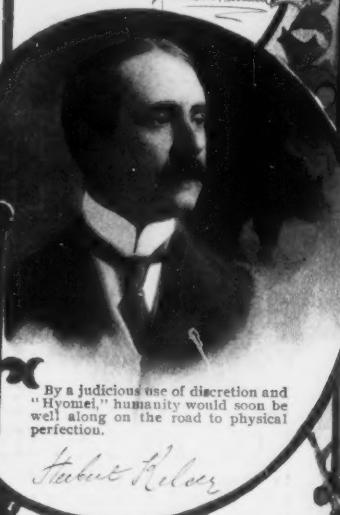
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